



HISTORY OF  
THE UNITED METHODIST  
CHURCH

FRANKLINTON, NORTH CAROLINA  
1844-1994

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1994



**HISTORY OF**  
**THE**  
**FRANKLINTON**  
**UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**  
**OF**  
**FRANKLINTON, NORTH CAROLINA**



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METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SOUTH

North Carolina Conference

Raleigh District

Tar River Circuit

APPOINTMENT	Ministers NAME
Dec. 1842-43	Robert C. Maynard
Dec. 1844	Sidncy D. Bumpus (Father of Robah F. Bumpus)
Dec. 1845-46	John W. Lewis; R.T. Heflin
Dec. 1847	Alfred Norman; J.M. Fulton
Dec. 1848	Thomas S. Campbell; Jos. L. Nicholson
Dec. 1849	Archibald C. Allen
Dec. 1850	Archibald C. Allen; Johnivy M. Sharp
Dec. 1851	Numa F. Reid; P.H. Joyner, Sup.  (Conference met in Louisburg)
Dec. 1853-54	
Dec. 1855	William Carter; James W. Wheeler
Dec. 1856-'57	Lemon Shell; James F. Smoot; J.W. Floyd, Sup.
Dec. 1858	William M. Jordan; R.C. Maynard, Sup.
Dec. 1859	Joseph B. Martin; James Reid
Dec. 1861	William H. Barnes; R.C. Maynard, Sup.  (Conference met in Louisburg, 1861)
Dec. 1862-63	T. Page Ricaud
Dec. 1864-'65	Joseph H. Wheeler; William Harris
Dec. 1866	Joseph H. Wheeler
Dec. 1867	J.P. Simpson
Dec. 1868-'69-'70-'71	Paul J. Carraway
Dec. 1872-'73-'74	Henry H. Gibbbons
Dec. 1875-'76-'77	Richard S. Webb; M.J. Hunt  (Youngsville Mission)



## APPOINTMENTS

## NAME

Dec. 1879-'80-'81-'82

William H. More

Dec. 1883

R.G. Barrett; J.T. Finlayson

Dec. 1884

John T. Gibbs

Dec. 1885-'86-'87-'88

Joseph J. Renn

Methodist Episcopal Church, South

Franklinton Circuit

Nov. 1889-'90

Edward Leigh Pell

Nov. 1891-'92-'93-'94

Nathan H. D. Wilson

Nov. 1895-'96

William S. Davis

Nov. 1897-'98-'99-1900

George Bascum Perry

Nov. 1901-'02-'03-'04

John H. Shore

Nov. 1909-'06-'07-'08

Nereus E. Coltrane

Nov. 1909—'10-'11-'12

William W. Rose-Died Feb. 5, 1913

William A. Cade, Sup.

Nov. 1913

Asa J. Parker

Nov. 1914-'15-'16

James H. Buffaloe

Nov. 1917-'18-'19

Timothy A. Sykes

Conference of 1919 made Franklinton Church a station

Nov. 1920

Solon A. Cotton

Nov. 1921

Robah F. Bumpus

Nov. 1922

Orren W. Dowd

Nov. 1923-'24-'25-'26

Edward H. Davis

Nov. 1927

D.N. Caviness

Nov. 1928-'29

W.C. Ball

Nov. 1930-'31-'32

Charles F. Read

Nov. 1933-'34-'35

Elma D. Weathers

Nov. 1936-'37-'38-'39-'40-'41-'42-'

'42-'44-'45-'46-'47-'48-'

Seymour E. Mercer





MAY 10, 1939 THE METHODIST CHURCH MADE

FRANKLINTON CHURCH A CHARGE

APPOINTMENTS

NAME

Nov. 1949-'50-'51

Paul Carruth- Feb. '51 went into Army as Chaplain

Mar. 1951-'52

Sidney T. Davis - From Wesleyan College, W. Va.

Returned Sept. '53 to W. Va.

Nov. 1953-'54-'55

Walter N. McDonald

Nov. 1956-'57-'58

Albert F. Fisher

June 1959-'60

William A. Crow

June 1961-'62-'63-'64-'65

Lawrence S Bridges

June 1966

Arnold Pope

June 1967-'68

Don Lee Harris

April, 1968 The United Methodist Church

June 1969-'70-'71

J. Earl Richardson

June 1973-Sept. 1974

Paul Leeland

Oct. 1974-Dec. 1975

Johnie Joyce

Jan. 1976-June 1977

Danny Allen

June 1977-June 1981

Norman Knight

June 1981-May 1983

Clay Smith

June 1983-June 1985

Geraldine Ingram

June 1985-June 1986

Randy Wall

June 1986-June 1992

Michael A. Davis

June 1992-June 1994

William V. Taylor



PRESIDING ELDERS

RALEIGH DISTRICT

APPOINTMENTS

NAME

Dec. 1840-'41-'42-'43-'44

J. Jamison

Dec. 1845

Peter Doub

Dec. 1846-'47-'48-'49

David B. Nicholson

Dec. 1850-'51-'52-'53-'54

Hezekiah G. Leigh

WASHINGTON DISTRICT

Dec. 1855-'56-'57

Robert I. Carter

RALEIGH DISTRICT

Dec. 1858-'59

David B. Nicholson

Dec. 1860-'61-'62

William Barringer

Dec. 1863-'64

Numa F. Reid

Dec. 1865

Dec. 1866-'67-'68

Linville L. Hendron

Dec. 1869

W.H. Bobbitt

Dec. 1870-'71

Numa F. Reid

Dec. 1872-'73

W.H. Bobbitt

Dec. 1874-'75

J.P. Moore

Dec. 1876-'77-'78-'79

Nathan H. D. Wilson, Sen.

Dec. 1880-'81-'82-'83

S.D. Adams

Dec. 1884-'85-'86-'87

N.H.D. Wilson, Sen.

Dec. 1887

Frank L. Reid

Dec. 1888

W.S. Black

Nov. 1889

W.S. Black

Nov. 1890-'91-'92-'93

"Uncle" Jessie A. Cunningham

Nov. 1894-'95-'96-'97-'

E.A. Yates

Nov. 1898-'99-1900-'01

J.T. Gibbs

Nov. 1902-'03-'04-'05

William H. Moore



## APPOINTMENTS

Nov. 1906-'07-'08-'09

Nov. 1910

Nov. 1911-'12-'13

Nov. 1914

Nov. 1915-'16-'17-'18

Nov. 1919-'20-'21-'22

Nov. 1923-'24-'25-'26

Nov. 1927-'28-'29

Nov. 1930-'31

Nov. 1932-'33-'34

Nov. 1935-'36-'37-'38

## NAME

R. B. John

W.L. Cunniggim-died-J.H. Hall, Sup.

John H. Hall

M. T. Plyler

J.E. Underwood

J.C. Wooten

M.T. Plyler

M. Bradshaw

Harry M. North-died F.S. Love, Sup.

Frank S. Love

J.H. Barnhardt

## DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENTS

Nov. 1939-'40-'41-'42-'43

Nov. 1944-'45-'46-'47-'48-'49

Nov. 1950

Nov. 1951-'52

Nov. 1953-'54-'55-'56-'57

Nov. 1958-'59-'60-'61-'62-'63

Nov. 1964

Nov. 1965-'66-'67-'68

Nov. 1969-'70

Nov. 1971

Nov. 1975

Nov. 1980

Nov. 1983

Nov. 1989

H.T. Glass

H.B. Porter

E.B. Fisher

Robert E. Brown-died Nov. 20, 1952

R. G. Dawson

G.S. Eubank

N.W. Grant

N.W. Grant

Leon Russell

Jack W. Page

Warren Petteway

Reginald Ponder

Tommy Smith

Belton Joyner



ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD CHAIRMAN OF THE FRANKLINTON  
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 1968-1984

1968-1970	B.N. Williamson, Jr.
1970-1972	C.G. Hight, Jr.
1972-1975	Woodrow Haskins
1976-1978	Garland Preddy
1979-1980	Mrs. R.C. Whitfield
1981	Mrs. I.L. Bigham, Jr.
1982	Floyd Wilson
1983-1988	Mrs. Joe Whitaker
1989-1993	Mrs. I.L. Bigham, Jr.
1994-	Avery Fuller

BOARD OF TRUSTEES' CHAIRMAN OF THE FRANKLINTON  
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 1968-1984

1968-1969	Dr. R.C. Whitfield
1969-1970	Norris Collins
1970-1971	C.W. Brown
1972	Clarence Garrison
1973	T.J. Jackson
1974-1980	LaVerne Appleford and Joe Whitaker
1981-1982	Mrs. R.W. Moore
1983-1984	LaVerne Appleford and Joe Whitaker
1984-1992	Phil Whitfield
1993-1994	Brodie Green





# THE FRANKLINTON METHODIST CHURCH

## THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SOUTH, RALEIGH DISTRICT, TAR RIVER CIRCUIT

The Raleigh and Gaston Railway was begun in 1836. Along its right of way the construction crews built small shacks in which to live. One of these settlements became known as the Franklin Depot. Since the country around was thickly populated, the settlement grew and in 1842 was incorporated as the town of Franklinton. Two years later, in 1844, the people of this village decided to build a Methodist church. The year 1844 is important in Methodism because it was at this time that the slave-holding states formed a separate Church. So the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the little Church in Franklinton had their beginnings the same year.

Little is known of the earliest days of this Church except that it became part of the Tar River Circuit, which is one of three oldest in North Carolina. The Rev. Robert C. Maynard, who served the Tar River Circuit in 1842 and 1843, and the Rev. J. Jamison, the Presiding Elder of the District, were probably instrumental in its origin. Both of these men were living here when the town was incorporated, for the town charter shows that they owned the property now (1968) belonging to Mr. Hugh Daniel, Mrs. Marvin Hardy, and the Al Joyner estate. The only other Methodists we know who were in this area in 1844 were the men whose names appear on the deed for the church property: Richard W. Godwin, John W. Whitfield, William F. Hillyard, William H. Joyner, Samuel R. Haywood, Howell Cook, James S. Yarborough, Henry Whitfield, and John Nicholson. Most of these names are familiar, for their descendants live in and around Franklinton today.

The property purchased for the church was lot No. 21, according to the plat. 2 This half-acre lot was on the corner of Main and Mason Streets. The northern boundary is marked today by the small willow oak tree on the school grounds, near the walk. This tree sprang up in the fence line within twenty feet of the church building, which faced Main Street. The deed is an interesting document. The Methodists brought not only the half acre in the center of town, but the woods and waterways thereon. The deed also included explicit instructions about how the property was to be handled and what procedure was to be followed if a sale should become necessary. The building<sup>3</sup> was a rather small wooden structure painted white. It had a small belfry, and two doors in front, with steps which ran the entire width of the building. The men used one door and sat on that side of the auditorium, and the women the other.

Twenty-one ministers served the Tar River Circuit between 1844 and 1889. The reason there were so many - - twenty-one in forty-five years - - is that the Conference did not permit a man to stay on the same charge more than two years. Among these men were some of the most outstanding in the Conference, for the Tar River Circuit was one of its best appointments. They were men of varied ability, and we may be sure that all of them left their imprint upon the little Franklinton church.

Of all the early ministers, the Rev. Robert C. Maynard has been the best remembered. He located here, his second wife<sup>4</sup> was a Franklin County woman, and he was the most colorful. It is strange, but our peculiarities are often remembered longer than our good deeds. Mr. Maynard had a violent temper and on the slightest provocation would dismiss his congregation with very uncomplimentary remarks. On one such occasion Mrs. Harriet Moore came out of the church and



fastened a stern eye on her young daughter. "Joe," she said, "I have a feeling that you are responsible for this. What did you do?" And Joe, with great embarrassment, admitted that she had held a flower up for a friend to smell. A short time before he died, Mr. Maynard preached in the Franklinton church a sermon denouncing "Aunt Abby" House for her profanity and way of living. It was a fearless thing to do, for Yankee generals, carpetbaggers, and Governors of North Carolina had quaked before her wrath. It was said because of this sermon "Aunt Abby" danced on Maynard's grave. Long after he died, the things he said and did continued to amuse the people who had known him. It has never been indicated that he was prejudiced or held a grudge. His anger was always a flash and over, but wherever or whenever he was irritated, he expressed himself fluently. His obituary says that he was a martyr to "neuralgia of the head." Probably a lot of his temper can be laid to this affliction. His interest in the little church built during his ministry continued after he located, for in 1853, when half the church lot was sold, he signed the deed because he was chairman of the Board of Trustees. After locating, he became a tract agent and traveled over this part of the state selling religious publications. Who knows but that he established the circulating library which the Franklinton Sunday School operated until about 1910? It is certain that for years his influence for good was definitely felt by the little church and throughout the community.

It is probably of interest to many that the first man to receive the appointment to the Tar River Circuit after the Franklinton church was built in 1844 was the Rev. Sidney D. Bumpass, father of our beloved Robah F. Bumpass. Sidney Bumpass became the editor of the first Conference paper, The Weekly Message, which was begun in 1851. Copies of this rare old paper are to be found in the Duke and University of North Carolina libraries.

In December, 1845, the Rev. John W. Lewis was appointed to the circuit. He left the Tar River Circuit a rare legacy, a journal of his work on the charge, in 1846 and 1847, and a roll of Church members. His journal covers his work from day to day. He traveled on horseback or by buggy, and dined or lodged with different people each day. After preaching he would move on to another church or locality. The Tar River Circuit at this time had nineteen churches, with services held whenever the minister could come, no matter what day of the week. When he went to Conference, Mr. Lewis reported that he had traveled 3375 miles. His churches were: Elizabeth Chapel, Shilo Woods, Serepta, Shocco Chapel, Cokesbury, Plank Chapel, Franklinton, Kingswood, Grove Hill, Banks Chapel, Smith's, Hicks S.H. /sic/, Concord, Ebenezer, Prospect, Louisburg, Salem, Jerusalem, and Trinity. Mr. Lewis' assistant was young Rufus T. Heflin, who was reared within a few miles of Franklinton. Mr. Heflin later became one of the most powerful preachers of the Conference and was the first editor of the North Carolina Christian Advocate, published in Raleigh. Mr. Lewis' list of the members of the Franklinton church between December, 1845, and December, 1847, included: Rickey Furman, William F. Hillyard, J. Henry Whitfield, Richard M. Godwin, E.A. Puryear, Jos. A. (or J.) Cook, Wylie Homes, James Ball, Mann Bryant, Henry Pearce, Henry Henley, Doctor Cole, William Jones, Susan May, Elizabeth Allen, Mary Cole, Margaret Joiner, Martha Joiner, Sarah L. Godwin, S.H. Kearney, Martha Yarborough, Harriet A. Young, Susan A. Cook, Sarah A. Short, J. Murray Stone, Martha Stone, Mary J. Cook, Elizabeth Dent, Jane Dent, Susan Dent, Margaret Dent, James Dent, Nancy Winston, Martha A. Tucker, Thomas W. Short, Alexander Gordon, Mary Gordon, Amanda Cook, and Harriet A. Cook.

Following Mr. Lewis as ministers on the charge were: the Rev. Alfred Norman, with G.M. Fulton as assistant, in December, 1847; the Rev. Thomas S. Campbell, with James L. Nicholson as assistant, in December, 1848; and the Rev. Archibald C. Allen, with Johniv Sharp as assistant, in December, 1849 and 1850. Then came the Rev. Numa F. Reid. Of all the twenty-one ministers who served the whole Tar River Circuit, Mr. Reid probably became the most outstanding





preacher in the Conference. The Tar River charge was his first appointment, and he served it for two years, beginning in December, 1851. He lived in Louisburg, did excellent work, and was greatly beloved by his people. The Conference met in Louisburg his first year on the charge.

After Mr. Reid there are two years in which the preachers are unknown. The Tar River Circuit then had the Rev. William Carter, with James W. Wheeler, in 1855; and the Rev. Lemon Shell, with James F. Smoot and J. W. Floyd. Mr. Shell's appointment was for two years, 1856 and 1857. In this latter year he reported in the Christian Advocate excellent meetings held on the circuit, with many joining the various churches. Included in this number were a few Negroes. Mr. Shell also wrote the obituaries of two members of the Franklinton church, John E. Young, age thirty-six, who joined the church in 1844, and Mrs. Sarah Conyers, age fifty-two, who joined in 1845.<sup>8</sup>

The Rev. William M. Jordan, with the Rev. R.C. Maynard as supply, came in December, 1858. In a May, 1859, issue of the Christian Advocate there is an account of the Methodist and Baptist Sunday Schools of Raleigh having a picnic in Franklinton. They chartered a train of six coaches from the Raleigh and Gaston Railroad. The iron horse, the "G.W. Mordecai," was beautifully decorated with flowers and evergreens. The trip was made in about one hour and twenty minutes. On arriving at their destination, they found the different Sunday Schools of Franklinton lined up in front of Major Thomas' Hotel, where Professor George W. Neal, principal of the Franklinton Academy, welcomed them to the hospitality of the village. Their picnic lunch was served in the grove of the Academy, near the intersection of Main and Green Streets.

Until this time the ministers of the Tar River Circuit had always lived in Louisburg. In 1859, however, Louisburg withdrew from the circuit and became a station. At a meeting of the Quarterly Conference of the circuit, it was decided that the ministers on the charge should henceforth live in Franklinton, and the Franklinton church undertook to purchase a house in Franklinton for a parsonage, one of the very few parsonages in the entire Conference. The house purchased was known as the "Yellow House"; together with its two-acre lot it cost \$1,250.00. The trustees of the property were: James Aldridge Henley, George W. Neal, Joseph Kearney, John W. Whitfield, Warmach Hazelwood, Washington Branch, William Oscar Green, Nathaniel W. Lawrence, and Bryant Young. These men represented various churches on the charge. Acquiring a parsonage was a progressive step, for few churches in North Carolina owned the houses in which their ministers lived. The parsonage property continued to be used for the same purpose for about a hundred years.

The first pastor to occupy the new parsonage was the Rev. Joseph B. Martin. He was the father of Lizzie Martin, who was missionary to China before her marriage to Dr. J.A. Morris of Banks Church. In 1861, the Rev. William H. Barnes was sent to the circuit, and again the Rev. R.C. Maynard was supply.

The Conference of 1862 and 1863 sent the Rev. Thomas Page Ricaud to the circuit, which embraced fifteen churches at the time. Among these were Trinity, Grove Hill, Wesley Chapel, Banks Chapel, Franklinton, Plank Chapel, Elizabeth Chapel, and others whose names are not known. During the year 1863, 178 people were converted on the circuit, and there were accessions at every appointment except three. About the only printed news items of these years, from the Franklinton church, are the obituaries, written by Mr. Ricaud, of the men who lost their lives in the Civil War.

T. Page Ricaud's personal life was unusual. Left an orphan quite young, he was taken by a relative to live in



Mexico City. There he was a student at the University of Mexico, and was studying to become a Roman Catholic priest when civil war broke out and he joined the revolutionists. This revolution resulted in the establishment of the Republic of Mexico. When the war was over, he went to France for a short time and then came to the United States. He located in Virginia and began the study of law. Attending a Methodist revival, he was converted and joined the Methodist Church, and in 1841, at the age of twenty-four years, he was licensed to preach. In the 1880's, while he was pastor of the 5th. Street Church, Wilmington, a young Chinese was brought to his door. Through the influence of Mr. Ricaud, this young Chinese, Charlie Jones Soong, was converted and then educated at Trinity Collage. Upon graduation from Trinity, he returned to China. His children are the famous Soongs who molded the history of China over a period of years. So Mr. Ricaud's influence has been felt around the world.

In December 1864, 1865, and 1866, the Rev. Joseph H. Wheeler received the appointment to the Tar River Circuit, with William Harris. Mr. Wheeler has been remembered as an excellent pastor. Whenever he was passing the home of one of his church members, he always stopped for a short visit and prayer. Mr. John H. Whitfield recalled that as a very small boy he ran to his mother, saying, "Ma, what shall I do? Brother Wheeler is coming in, and both of my knees are skinned." Mr. Wheeler was followed by the Rev. J. P. Simpson.

Then in 1868 the Rev. Paul J. Carraway was sent to the Tar River Circuit, where he remained four years. While here his wife and two children died. With the exception of one other, these were the first deaths to occur in a minister's family on the charge. Their graves are in our cemetery. At a later date another child whose name is forgotten was buried at the rear of the old church. Towards the end of his years in Franklinton, Mr. Carraway was president of the state council of the Friends of Temperence.<sup>11</sup>

In 1872 the Rev. Henry H. Gibbons was sent to the Tar River Circuit and served for three years. During his ministry the women of the Franklinton Church had the old-fashioned pulpit remodeled, painted the interior of the building, and bought new chairs and table for the altar. The Raleigh District Conference met in the church in 1874. Mr. Gibbons' daughter, Miss Julia Gibbons, taught a Sunday School class and was very much in the town.

About this time, in 1874 or 1875, the church bought an organ. Before this, they had used a tuning fork to establish the pitch for unaccompanied singing. In 1876 they bought new song books, and the first new song learned was "Ninety and Nine."<sup>12</sup> The choir leaders were Mr. Bob Winston and Miss Carrie Young. The only organists, whose names are known, over a long period of years, were Miss Bettie Henley, Miss Stella Kittle, Miss Lillie Moss, Miss Fanny Cheatham, and Miss Fannie Green. Bettie Henley was away at Greensboro Female Collage when her mother wrote her that the church was buying an organ and that she must take lessons in order to play it when it came.

The Rev. A.A. Boshamer, a brilliant young minister in the Conference in 1876, helped the Rev. Richard S. Webb, then pastor, hold a meeting which resulted in many joining the church. This same year the Webbs had a baby to die. Mr. Webb was here three years, with M. J. Hunt and R. C. Beaman as his assistants. One of the Webb children was eventually to become president of Randolph-Macon College in Lynchburg, Virginia.

In 1879 the Rev. William H. Moore came to the charge, at a salary of \$920.00. Next year the charge was assessed \$8.00 for foreign missions. It paid \$315.00, the largest amount paid by any charge in the Conference. It also paid all the





other Conference claims in full.

The Quarterly Conference minutes for 1881 are the earliest original records of the Tar River Circuit in existence, (All earlier circuit records survive only in the form of reports printed in the Christian Advocate). The charge was composed of eight churches, of which five had Sunday Schools. It is not known when the Franklinton Sunday School was organized or who was its first superintendent. James Aldridge Henley was superintendent for a number of years before his death in 1873. He was succeeded by William Pride Clegg. Miss Bettie Joyner (later Mrs. John Brewer) taught a class of young girls in 1871. Sometime between 1875 and 1879 Miss Bettie Henley (later Mrs. S.C. Vann) had a class of children. The roll of this class, the earliest Sunday school record left in the Franklinton church, included: Sudie Cheatham, Lula Bullock, Eula Furman, Rosa Kearney, Addie Webb, Delia Tharrington, Cora Patterson, Ship Webb, Jody Cheatham, and Otis Furman. Mrs. Martha A. Tucker taught the small children over a period of years in the 1870's and until her death in 1883. Some others who taught in the old church building were Mrs. Eliza Green Joyner, Mrs. Pauline J. Mitchell, and Miss. Sue Cheatham.

In 1883, when the Rev. R.G. Barrett was pastor, the charge had seventeen stewards, three from the Franklinton church, William Pride Clegg, Dr. J.F. Moss, and Thomas D.H. Young. Presley C. Persons was trustee of the Franklinton church property.

The pastor in charge in 1884 was the Rev. John T. Gibbs, who lived to be a hundred years old. The assessments of the various churches of the circuit for that year were: Franklinton, \$245.00; Wesley, \$65.00; Banks Chapel, \$300.00; Grove Hill, \$100.00; Plank Chapel, \$300.00; Kittrell, \$65.00; Trinity, \$265.00; and Ebenezer, \$110.00— a total of \$1,450.00.

In 1885 the Rev. Joseph J. Renn came to stay for four years. Next fall (1886) William Pride Clegg died, one of the most active members in the church. He was replaced as Sunday school superintendent by Robert N. Winston, as steward by Joseph L. Mitchell, and as recording secretary by Joseph Orlando Green. On May 2, 1886, William Pride Clegg had presided at the meeting at which an Auxiliary of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society was organized in Franklinton, through the influence of Miss Mamie Barrett, daughter of a former minister. There were thirteen charter members, and the following officers were elected: president, Mrs. Pauline Jeffreys Mitchell; vice-president, Mrs. Annie Winston Furman; corresponding secretary, Miss Mamie Barrett; recording secretary, Mrs. Harriet Tucker Moss; and Mrs. Eliza Green Joyner. The stewards for 1887 were E. Baxter Clegg, J.O. Green, Dr. J.P. Moss, and Isham J. Cheatham. This same year the Sunday school observed Children's Day, apparently for the first time, and the District Conference met in Franklinton. In 1888 two new class rooms were added to the rear of the church. These were twenty-one by sixteen feet in size and could be entered from the church or the outside. In the spring of 1889 a second missionary society was organized, the "Bright Jewels". Men, women, and children joined, and by 1894 there were forty-four members, with Miss Sue Cheatham as lady manager.

The fall of 1889 saw the North Carolina Conference divided, and the Western North Carolina Conference formed. The same year the Franklinton Circuit was created by the removal of several churches from the Tar River Circuit, which had grown to nine hundred members. During these years the Methodist Church was stern and rigid in its ideas, and the ministers adhered strictly to its discipline. Drunkenness, selling of liquors, profanity, and disorderly conduct were all dealt with, and if the offense merited it, the erring member was expelled. Some ministers were more rigid than others and



fearlessly used the "pruning knife on their offending flock." At times, it is needless to say, the little Franklinton church was shaken to its foundations. The changes at the end of the period were not confined to the reorganization of the Conference and the circuits. An early custom which disappeared in the 1890's was that of draping the interior of the church in mourning when a funeral was to be held there. Yards and yards of black and white material were festooned around the altar and pulpit. Recalled after more than seventy-five years, this seems almost pagan.

## II

### THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SOUTH, RALEIGH DISTRICT, FRANKLINTON CIRCUIT

On the new circuit in 1889 were the churches of Franklinton, Banks, Grove, Hill, and Wesley's. (Wesley's was removed in 1891.) For the first time the Franklinton church held services both morning and evening two Sundays a month. So a new era began. The Rev. Edward Leigh Pell, quite a young man, with untold ability and a great deal of energy, was its first minister. There were only 104 members in the Franklinton church at the beginning of Mr. Pell's ministry. He had the remarkable experience, though, of receiving fourteen more immediately upon his arrival. After Mr. Webb, the minister for the past four years, had gone to Conference, the laymen of Franklinton began a meeting which was the outgrowth of a meeting being held by a Mr. Pierson at the Presbyterian Church in Henderson. It was carried on by the laymen alone, with various people preaching. The results were outstanding. Most of the fourteen who joined the church were grown men, several of them among the most active members of the church later. During the two years of his pastorate Mr. Pell received thirty-three new members.

Mr. Pell knew how to organize a church and strove desperately to carry out his ideas. Many amusing tales have been told about his effort to make the sexton, Eden Bower, who was a member of the church, ring the bell on time. He wanted the bell rung for five minutes and stopped when the hour for service arrived. On the first stroke of the bell, the choir were to take their places, and Mr. Pell took his seat in the chancel. On the last strike of the bell, the music for service was supposed to begin. It is needless to say that he struggled in vain. Miss Sue Cheatham remembered going to church one night when service had started. When she entered, however, no one was in the choir and no one in the pews. Mr. Pell was singing the first hymn alone.

On October 6, 1890, a building committee was appointed by the Quarterly Conference to erect a new church in Franklinton. Benjamin W. Ballard was elected Chairman; Samuel C. Vann, treasurer; and Isham J. Cheatham, secretary. The Citizens Bank in Raleigh was chosen as a place of deposit for all funds coming in. Building a new church was a big undertaking for the small group, but everyone entered into the work with much enthusiasm. During this same year the parsonage property was greatly improved. Also in this year Susan Wilder, one of the two Negro members of the church, died and was buried from the church.

At the third Quarterly Conference held on June 7, 1891, Kenneth D. Holmes was recommended for license to preach. Benjamin W. Ballard was elected superintendent of the Franklinton Sunday School, to succeed Robert N. Winston. The Official Board consisted of Joseph O. Green, Isham Johnson Cheatham, Edward Baxter Clegg, James Andrew Henley, Benjamin W. Ballard, and Joe L. Mitchell. The Conference also appointed a committee to select a site for the new church. The trustees who signed the two deeds, buying the new lot and selling the old one, were: Dr. Joseph Frank Moss, Presley





C. Persons, Benjamin W. Ballard, Samuel C. Vann, Dr. John H. Harris, Robert N. Winston, and Henry E. Pearce.

The new location was purchased for \$600.00. The plans were drawn by Benjamin D. Price of Philadelphia. According to a newspaper account, they showed "a very beautiful structure of modern design." It is not known what the church cost. A great deal of it was not given in cash. Men who had teams did the hauling. Others gave sand and other materials. Some did part of the actual building. The bricks were made at the state penitentiary and hauled, free of charge, by the Seaboard Air Line Railroad.<sup>14</sup> It was estimated that upon completion the new church would be worth \$6,000.00. The cornerstone was laid August 5, 1891, at ceremonies conducted by the beloved "Uncle" Jessie A. Cunningham, Presiding Elder of the District. Addresses were delivered by the Rev. J.H. Gordon, the Rev. L.L. Nash, and Josephus Daniel. Placed in the cornerstone were many things, among them a historical sketch of Franklinton, a historical sketch of the Franklinton Methodist Church, the roll of officers of the church, the names of the building committee, a list of members of the Sunday School, and the official roll of the Franklinton Baptist Church, as well as photographs of some of the leaders in the early years of the Methodist Church, James Aldridge Henley, William Oscar Green, and Mrs. Martha A. Moore Tucker.

In December, 1891, the Rev. N.H.D. Wilson, a young man who had just joined the Conference and just acquired a wife, was sent to the Franklinton Circuit. Soon after he came to the charge, the Quarterly Conference was held in Franklinton. It was an all-day session, and the stewards from the country churches were invited to the parsonage for dinner. Mrs. Wilson brought out her best. The table was laid with her wedding linen, china, glass, and silver. "Aunt Hanna" prepared delicious food. Everything went well. At the afternoon business session, when the question of the minister's salary was brought up (it was \$800.00), the young preacher intimated that he would like a raise. "No," said one or two stewards, "Anyone who could serve such a fine dinner had no need for more money." This story was told by Mrs. Wilson herself. The enthusiasm of the young couple inspired the people with new hope in their effort to complete the building. The first service was held in the new church October 2, 1892, and the sermon was preached by Dr. Jesses A. Cunningham. When the District Conference met here in 1893, Tchi Ho Yun, a Korean who later became a great leader in his own country, lectured one night. On account of crop failure, the church building was not paid for until Mr. Wilson's last year in Franklinton. The dedication took place November 3, 1895. Dr. Pell was invited to preach the sermon. In commenting on the event, the Richmond Christian Advocate said: Dr. Pell reports an ideal Sabbath, great congregation, the presence of the Holy Spirit, princely entertainment and a warm reception by a host of friends gathered from all parts of the State." Both Mr. and Mrs. Wilson were very active in the Sunday School work, and Mrs. Wilson was a great addition to the Missionary Society. They were both greatly beloved by the young people, and in later years Mr. Wilson often returned to officiate at their marriages and to baptize their children.

Mr. Wilson was followed in 1895 by the Rev. William S. Davis, a veteran of the Civil War. Col. Davis had a large, happy family. His daughter, Elizabeth, gave herself for mission work during a meeting held in our church. She was sent to Brazil and there married the Rev. Mr. Borchers. She and her husband were still engaged there in mission work as late as 1956.<sup>15</sup> In 1896 the Parsonage Aid Society was organized, with Mrs. Benjamin W. Ballard as president and Mrs. Samuel C. Vann as Treasurer. Col. Davis' ministry lasted less than two years, for on the first Sunday in September, 1897, he was stricken with paralysis while holding the morning service.

The Conference of 1897 sent the Rev. George Bascom Perry to the charge. During his ministry forty-eight people joined the



church in Franklinton. In 1898 the Raleigh District Sunday School Conference was held here, with Benjamin W. Ballard as president. Some of the local people who were among the speakers were: Col. William F Green, Will H. Moore Jenkins, and J.B. Floyd. Another was Professor R. Bruce White of Franklinton Academy, who belonged to the Baptist Church. On Monday night James H. Southgate of Trinity College delivered an address, and on Tuesday night Dr. John C. Kilgo, also of Trinity College. On Wednesday night the Franklinton Sunday School, under the management of Mrs. S.C. Vann, gave a delightful program. In March of that year the children were organized into a missionary group of their own called "Little Workers," with Mrs. S.C. Vann as their leader. There were thirty-six members. That same year the Raleigh District Missionary Institute met for two days in Franklinton. Mr. N.H.D. Wilson, Conference Missionary Secretary, was one of the speakers. When the fall of 1901 brought the four years of Mr. Perry's pastorate to an end, a great crowd of friends were at the station to see his family depart.

In November, 1901, the Rev. John Henry Shore came. According to our custom, he found the people ready to open their hearts and homes to him and his family. Mr. Shore was an excellent preacher and brought a number of men into the church. He served the Franklinton charge until November, 1905. During his pastorate a slate roof was put on the church and a new parsonage was built. The old parsonage which had been the pride and joy of the 1860's had fallen into a sad state. It was inhabited by bats. The Methodist bats were a constant source of excitement to the quiet little town. At church lawn parties the bats were a great hazard because they would swoop between the Japanese lanterns and land in a dish of ice cream. The old parsonage had to go! Everyone entered eagerly into plans for a new parsonage. 16 When it was finished, the minister reported to the Christian Advocate: "The parsonage is modern, elegant, capacious, and located on a large, most desirable lot on Main Street, with shade and excellent well water." Mrs. Shore was greatly interested in Sunday School and mission work..

The Rev. Nereus E. Coltrane served for four years, beginning in November, 1905. Ninety-nine people joined the church during his pastorate. A carpet for the church and pulpit chairs still in use were bought at a cost of \$1,000.00. In the summer of 1908 the Sunday School observed an unusual Rally Day. The church had already developed a deep and long-lasting interest in the Methodist Orphanage in Raleigh, and the children were accustomed to contributing to it every Sunday. The Rally Day offering, however, was to be very special. As the number of each class was called, they came forward with their offerings — bunches of bananas, baskets of apples, oranges, and vegetables, ham and bacon, and a cash offering which amounted to \$61.00. All this was sent to the children of the Methodist Orphanage in Raleigh. The last year of Mr. Coltrane's pastorate the Raleigh District Conference met in Franklinton.

In November, 1909, the greatly beloved Rev. William W. Rose was sent to the Franklinton Circuit. During his ministry the Sunday School classrooms were added at a cost of \$3,000.00, and a new heating plant was installed. Banks Church was also built. Mr. Rose was truly a wonderful pastor and organizer. Sixty-three people joined the church during his ministry. Mother's Day was observed by the Sunday School on May 12, 1912, for the first time recorded here. The church and community were deeply grieved over Mr. Rose's sudden death on February 5, 1913. In all the years from 1844 to today (1968), he was the only minister who has died while serving the Franklinton church. The Rose Wesley Sunday School Class was named for him.

After Mr. Rose's death, William A. Cade, a student at Trinity College, was sent as supply. He lived in the parsonage with the Rose family. Everyone liked him, and his work had marked success. Nineteen people joined the church.





The Sunday School celebrated Fanny J. Crosby Day in honor of the blind Christian hymnwriter, who was ninety-three years old March 24, 1913. Her hymns, favorites with the whole church, were frequently sung. It was probably E.J. Cheatham, superintendent of the Sunday School, who originated the idea for this celebration. Everyone wore a violet, her favorite flower, and sang her songs, Blessed Assurance, Jesus is Mine, "Tell Me The Story of Jesus," and others. The Sunday School sent Miss Crosby a telegram with best wishes for a happy birthday. In reply she wrote the following verses:

‘Children, would that I were with you In your Southern clime so fair  
Would my arms could gently fold you, While the music fills the air.  
And I ask that our Redeemer In your hearts and lives may dwell,  
For I love you, yes, I love you, More than thought or tongue can tell.”

The Rev. Asa J. Parker followed Mr. Cade in December, 1913. His adopted daughter, Rena Jones, played the organ, and Mr. Parker and his daughter Annie had good voices which added greatly to the choir. In 1914 the Sunday School again observed Fanny J. Crosby Day, and the Primary Department prepared a lovely Rally Day Program. This time the Cradle Roll had a part in the exercises.

The Rev. James H. Buffaloe came to the circuit in November, 1914, and stayed three years. In January, 1915, the sliding doors were installed between the Sunday School rooms and the church. Next September the District Sunday School Conference was held here. Serving as president was R. E. Prince, with E. J. Cheatham as secretary and treasurer. Dinner was served for the first time in the basement under the Sunday School rooms. When Fanny J. Crosby died, just before her ninety-fifth birthday, the Sunday School took a collection to be sent to Bridgeport, Connecticut, to be used to erect a Fanny J. Crosby Memorial. The blind writer's last hymn, written a few days before her death, was entitled "At Evening Time It Shall Be Light." On May 14, 1916, Mother's Day was observed. On July 29, 1917, the Sunday School had a patriotic service at which they presented to each of the Methodist soldiers a pocket Testament and took a collection for the Red Cross. Two hundred seventy seven people attended Sunday School that day.

From November, 1917, to November, 1920, the Rev. Timothy A. Sikes served this church. On August 4, 1918, a beautiful service was held in honor of the men in the Army. Governor Bickett delivered a magnificent address, and service flags were presented. The church flag had sixteen stars for George L. Cooke, Paul D. Winston, Walter W. Cooke, Ben May, Joseph Whitaker, A. R. Winston, Graham Blackley, Shem Cooke, Paul Etheridge, James W. Fisher, Theo Fogleman, Sidney High, Alex Holmes, Armistead E. Henderson, Robert Rose, and Robert Speed. The Sunday School flag had thirty-six stars for: Graham Blackley, Isham N. Staunton, Thomas G. Perry, Ollie G. Holmes, Theo Fogleman, Ted O. Ray, Paul C. High, Willie J. Corbett, William J. Allen, George L. Cooke, Richard B. Conway, Claiborne F. Blackley, Shem B. Cooke, John Henry Harris, Jr., M. A. Davis, H. C. Rawls, M. B. Daniels, Joseph Whitaker, Junius H. Rose, Sidney C. High, Thomas Morton, W. E. Strother, Lumus C. King, David S. Smith, James W. Fisher, Ernest Wicker, Abram Reneher Winston, M. D. , Armistead E. Henderson, Walter W. Cook, Paul D. Winston, Robert J. Rose, Earl R. Sikes, J. H. Pierce, Grady Conyers, Hubert H. Utley, and Paul Etheridge. In February, 1919, a memorial service was observed for the soldiers who made the supreme sacrifice, Shem Blackley Cooke, Alexander Holmes, and H. C. Rails. The address was given by the Honorable Robert N. Page. During the year a meeting of outstanding importance was conducted, with Rev. Mr. Stanford, a minister of the Western Conference, preaching. The annual picnic with the Baptist Sunday School was held at Green Hill. The



Christmas contribution went to the Near East Relief. This same year (1919) the Franklinton church pledged \$11,505.25 towards the Centenary Drive for funds for mission work. As a culminating feature of the Centenary (the centennial of American Methodist missions) there was held in Columbus, Ohio, a great celebration, which Mr. Sikes attended. It was participated in by the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Canadian Methodist Church. In November the Conference made Franklinton a station with Wesley's. A new organ was given to the church in April, 1920.

The Rev. Solon A. Cotton was the next minister. He came in November, 1920. The College of Bishops decided at this time to put on a drive which was known as the Christian Education Movement. The allotment for the Franklinton church, \$9,250.00, was immediately pledged. It was during this year that the Rev. Harry M. North preached a series of magnificent sermons in our church.

In November, 1921, the Rev. Robah F. Bumpass came to this church. He was a scholarly and saintly man, and his very presence was a benediction and an inspiration. It was a matter of general regret when the Conference decided to move him at the end of a year.

In November, 1922, the Rev. Orren W. Dowd came to serve one year. Dr. E. H. Rawlings, one of the leaders in the campaign to collect Centenary pledges, spoke in our church. Next spring Mr. Dowd planted the garden at the parsonage in cotton instead of vegetables. The town watched and discussed this strange behavior with raised eyebrows. But when Mr. Dowd harvested his crop, he had made enough money (\$120.00) to support a native minister in Korea for a year. The Sunday School's first observance of Decision Day resulted in thirty-four joining the church on Easter Sunday. The Epworth League was organized this same year. In November Mrs. Samuel C. Vann (Bettie Henley) died. She was a great loss to the Sunday School and church, for she had been a member all her life and had taught a class nearly fifty years. Her class register, recorded in detail for more than thirty-five years, is the most complete source of information about the history of the Sunday School.

November, 1923, brought the Rev. Edward H. Davis to our church. He was a native of Franklin County and a descendant of the Rev. Joel King and a collateral descendant of the Rev. Green Hill, early Methodists in this area. He was a good preacher and an excellent pastor, and the work of the church thrived in all its departments.

The Rev. D. N. Caviness succeeded Mr. Davis in 1927. He was here only one year, for he retired when Conference met in November, 1928.

The Rev. W. C. Ball was the next minister. During his ministry, the bulletin board in front of the church was purchased, and the church had printed bulletins for the first time. In June, 1919, E. Joseph Cheatham resigned as superintendent of the Sunday School after serving for twenty-five years. Like his predecessor Benjamin W. Ballard, he continued his active service in the Sunday School as long as he lived.

The Rev. Charles F. Read came in 1930 for three years. While in Franklinton Mr. Read was not well, but his wife was a great help in carrying on the work of the church. Mrs. Nan Goodson Read was a deeply consecrated woman and



gave of herself untiringly to all phases of the church work. She played the organ beautifully. During Mr. Read's ministry Dr. Hickman, Dean of the Duke University Chapel, preached here twice. These were Depression years. The bank failed and the mills closed. The church, however, responded in many ways and tried to alleviate the needs of the community.

In 1933 the Rev. Elmo D. Weathers was sent to Franklinton. While he was here, the Parsonage Aid Society purchased dining room chairs and several other pieces of furniture.

The Rev. Rev. Seymour E. Mercer came to Franklinton in November, 1936, and remained for thirteen years. He served only two and a half years under the authority of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, which terminated in the Uniting Conference.

On May 10, 1939, the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the similar conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Protestant Church met in what is now called the United Conference, and formed the Methodist Church. Since that time the Presiding Elders have been called District Superintendents; the Sunday Schools, Church Schools; and the Woman's Missionary Society, the Woman's Society of Christian Service.

Under Mr. Mercer's leadership, the activities of the Franklinton church were many and varied. For a while Mr. Mercer taught, in the Franklinton High School, a Bible class with as many as forth-five students. Mrs. Mercer and Miss Nelle Joyner had charge of the Epworth League. In 1941 the Church School assembly room was painted, and an electric cross was given in memory of Joseph Cheatham, Jr. In 1944 Mrs. J.A. Cox organized a junior choir, and the church undertook to sponsor a Boy Scout troop. The Crusade for Christ assessment was \$1,938.00, most of which was raised in 1945. In May, 1946, a Hammond organ was given to the church in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel C. Vann. The church membership at this time numbered 464, and the Church School the next year 204. In 1949 Mrs. Mercer organized a new circle of the Woman's Society of Christian Service, composed of the younger women; today this is known as the Ruth Mercer Circle. During these thirteen years a number of prominent ministers assisted Mr. Mercer in revival services: the Rev. William A. Cade, the Rev. Orren W. Dowd, the Rev. Elmo D. Weathers, Dr. John Glenn, the Rev. Robert E. Brown, the Rev. Robert W. Bradshaw, and others. Dan Bowers, a ministerial student, assisted him in the summer for several years. The church property was well taken care of and many improvements made at the parsonage. During all these years Mr. Mercer was seldom free of physical pain, but no one ever heard him complain about his infirmity, although he had great difficulty walking and getting in and out of cars. He was an excellent pastor, a good preacher, and an efficient administrator. He served the Franklinton church faithfully and well.

In November, 1949, the Rev. Paul Carruth was sent to Franklinton. In March of the next year Week of Decision was observed. In the summer of 1950 a new bathroom was added to the parsonage. It was with regret that the church learned that Mr. Carruth was going into the Army as a chaplain. He left in February, 1951.

Next month the Rev. Sidney T. Davis came to serve this church while doing work on his doctorate at Duke





University. He was a member of the West Virginia Conference and had been teaching at Wesleyan College in Buchanan, West Virginia. Immediately before he came to Franklinton, the parsonage suffered terrific water damage from frozen pipes. The women in the Parsonage Aid Society went into action at once. Plumbing, plastering, painting, and papering had to be done. Most of the furniture had to be repaired because the glue had given way on account of the dampness. It was quite a job, but the Parsonage Aid Society had the house in very good condition by the time the Davis family arrived. While they were here, the kitchen was done over and modernized. The District Superintendent, on one of his visits, expressed his delight at the condition of the house and the way it was furnished. Before Easter, 1952, the church presented a Christian play called Simon the Leper, for which Mrs. Davis coached the young actors. They gave two impressive performances, and more than six hundred people enjoyed seeing it. The church at this time began working to raise money to build an Education Building. The most unusual project was a "Mile of Dollars," suggested by Mr. Davis. On U.S. Highway No. 1, which at that time ran past the church, attractive signs were put out a half mile from the church, to catch the attention of tourists. In front of the church a rope was stretched, on which the contributions were pinned. The young people had charge of this. When the money was counted, they had collected over \$1,000.00. On October 12, 1952, a beautiful service was held to dedicate the chimes given in memory of Miss Annie Rowe. That same year the organization of the Methodist Men took place, with fifty-three charter members. Mr. Davis was a wonderful preacher and organizer. Many people attended church who had never been there before. In September, 1953, Mr. Davis returned to West Virginia to continue work on his doctorate, leaving many warm friends in Franklinton.

Two months later Conference sent the Rev. Walter N. McDonald to serve this church. He was here until June, 1956, when Conference met for the first time in that month. In the summer of 1953, Mr. McDonald had a minister from South Carolina to assist him for a week of services. In July, 1954, the church observed Elmo Murray Speed Day in honor of Mr. Speed, who, had been a steward for fifty years and treasurer a good part of that time. Next year the Methodist Men gave the graduating class of the Franklinton High School a banquet, and presented each member with a Testament. That same year a new heating plant and air-conditioning system were installed in the church.

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The foregoing sketch of the history of the Franklinton Methodist Church began as a project for the Women's Missionary Society, before 1935. It has been built up from details collected piecemeal through the years since that time. The sources consulted may be of interest to some readers: the State Library in Raleigh; the Duke University Library; the North Carolina Christian Advocate; articles in secular newspapers of Franklinton, Louisburg, and Raleigh; the North Carolina Conference Journals; the minutes of the Raleigh District Quarterly Conference; the minutes of the Franklinton Methodist Church (none earlier than 1930 survive); records of the Franklinton Sunday School, consisting of a limited number of secretary's records, printed programs, and the diary and class rolls of Mrs. S.C. Vann (Bettie Henley); the minutes of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, the Woman's Missionary Society, and the Woman's Society of the Christian Service, of the Franklinton Methodist Church; L.S. Burkhead's Centennial of Methodism in North Carolina, published in Raleigh in 1876; pertinent articles in the various issues of Historical Papers of the North Carolina Historical Society and the Western North Carolina Conference Historical Society; the Rev. John W. Lewis' journal and church rolls (in the Duke University Library); the minutes of Masonic Lodge No. 123, Franklinton; unnumerable interviews with older members of the church from the time the project was undertaken; and a lifetime of personal memories.

Franklinton, North Carolina October 18, 1968





## NOTES

1. The deed gives the date of the purchase.
2. Franklin County Deed Book 29, page 1.
3. The building stood until after 1900, and many church members, including the writer, remember it.
4. The marriage is reported in an 1857 issue of the North Carolina Christian Advocate.
5. Family tradition; the writer is Joe's granddaughter, and knew her.
6. In the North Carolina Conference Journal circa 1863.
7. Obituaries in the North Carolina Conference Journals.
8. It has been impossible to discover why these names are not on John W. Lewis' rolls.
9. The North Carolina Christian Advocate first began to report accessions at this time.
10. Article by W.C. Norman in the North Carolina Christian Advocate, November 7, 1900.
11. North Carolina Christian Advocate, some time in 1872.
12. Diary of Bettie Henley (later Mrs. S.C. Vann).
13. Class records of Mrs. S.C. Vann.
14. Letter from John Winder, president of the railroad, to Samuel C. Vann.
15. Mrs. Borchers continued through the years to correspond with Mrs. Eleanor Ballard Joyner of Franklinton.
16. The old parsonage was demolished and the new parsonage erected on the same site. The night before the old building was to come down, the boys of Franklinton started the work by tearing off the porch by moonlight.



The following is a supplement to be attached to the history of the Franklinton Methodist Church, written by Mrs. Robert J Rose. Mrs. Rose's history concludes with the departure of the Reverend Walter McDonald. This addition begins with the arrival of the Reverend A.F. Fisher and continues through three years of the ministry of the Reverend Earl Richardson. This latter part was written by Edith Jackson.

November 23, 1970



The Reverend Albert F. Fisher followed Walter McDonald to the Franklinton Methodist Church in June, 1956. Mr. Fisher served the church for three years, and it was during this time that a new parsonage was built. Almost upon arrival, Mr. Fisher voiced discontent with the parsonage, and he recommended at his first Official Board meeting that a new dwelling for the minister be built. This was a controversial issue; some felt that renovation of the present parsonage would be wiser. The officers and members of the church held a series of meetings, and after a great deal of discussion, both for and against, they finally decided to sell the parsonage, purchase a lot, and build a new parsonage. This decision was not unanimous.

The parsonage was sold at public auction for \$8,450.00 to Joseph W. Pearce, and a lot was bought from Mrs. T.W. Whedbee for \$1,000.00. 1 The new parsonage would face Hillsboro Street and would be situated almost behind the old parsonage. On January 9, 1956, there was a ground breaking service for the new parsonage. Shovels of dirt were turned by the Reverend Grady Dawson, District Superintendent; the Reverend Albert F. Fisher, pastor; Francis H. Eason, chairman of the Board of Trustees; B. Napier Williamson, Jr., Chairman of the Official Board; and David Sigmon, superintendent of the Church School. Work was begun almost immediately by the contractor, A. Robert Wheeler, and on June 12, 1957, the pastor and his family moved into the new modern parsonage.

During Mr. Fisher's ministry there was progress in other areas, especially in youth work and stewardship. Each Christmas the young people presented a living Nativity scene enjoyed by the town and surrounding areas. And these same young people presented a Sunrise Service on Easter. For two years of Mr. Fisher's ministry at the end of the church year, there was money available to meet the budget without any special financial drive. 2 It is an understatement to say that this was unusual.

In November, 1957, the family of Alexander S. Powell presented in his memory four beautiful silver collection plates.

In April of 1959, the Quarterly Conference of the Franklinton Methodist Church approved a recommendation of the Official Board that a Building Committee be appointed, authorized, and empowered to proceed with the steps necessary for the construction of an Educational Building. 3 This move marked the first concrete effort on a project initiated in 1952 by the "Mile of Dollars."

Mr. Fisher was followed by the Reverend William A. Crow in June, 1959. Mr. Crow was a deeply dedicated minister. His love for his God, his church, and his fellowman was an inspiration not only to his members but to all who knew him. One of his first moves was to reinstate the Wednesday evening prayer service. He also started a fellowship supper held quarterly, followed by a visitation program. It was during the first month of Mr. Crow's ministry that a beautiful new carpet was purchased for the sanctuary. There had been a need of and desire for a new carpet for a long time; and finally through the efforts of the Rose Wesley Sunday School Class and the generosity of Mrs. Coy Cox, this dream was realized. A movement to add to the Building Fund was begun and an architect was called in to survey the needs for the future. In June of 1961, the North Carolina Conference moved Mr. Crow. His departure after only two years was a real blow, and it was the general consensus that he should have been allowed to remain in Franklinton at least one or two more years.

The Reverend Lawrence J. Bridges followed Mr. Crow. He remained for five years, and it was during this time that





the much discussed Educational Building was constructed. For many years there had been a need for more classrooms for the Church School. The church basement where most of the children's classes were held was woefully inadequate. As far back as 1952, a fund had been started for the desired building, and in 1959 a Building Committee had been appointed. The decision was made to construct the building on a lot behind the church purchased from John A. Moore for \$5,000.00.<sup>4</sup> The proposed building would face Hillsboro Street and would be placed in such a position that other construction could be added to the church or the new building if the need ever arose. Mr. Charles W. Davis of Raleigh was the architect, and Mr. Arthur Evans of Franklinton was the contractor. On Sunday morning, November 17, 1963, the Groundbreaking Service for the new building was held. Shovels of dirt were turned by Edward Alston Harris, Jr., representing the children; Harriet Hight, representing the youth; and George L. Cooke, representing the adults. The students and teachers of the Children's Department and one adult class moved into the new building in August, 1964. The brick veneer structure consisted of four classrooms, a fellowship hall which can be converted into four additional classrooms and a kitchen. The building cost approximately \$36,000.00.<sup>5</sup> Members of the Building Committee were G. Laverne Appleford, Mrs. Woodrow Haskins, T. Sidney Johnson, Tommie N. Stephens, A. Robert Wheeler, and Dr. Richard C. Whitfield. Mrs. E. Joseph Cheatham and family furnished the fellowship hall in memory of Mr. E. Joseph Cheatham and Miss Sue Cheatham. One of the classrooms was furnished by Mr. and Mrs. T.N. Stephens in memory of their niece, Rebecca Barnes. The kitchen was furnished by the Rose Wesley Class. In spite of the addition of this modern Educational Building, the attendance and interest shown in the Church School continued to decline. This was a fact deplored by the minister and all those interested in Christian education.

During Mr. Bridge's stay in Franklinton, the regular Sunday night services were discontinued during the summer months, and in the fall in their place a fellowship supper was held on the third Sunday night. For the first time, there existed a modern kitchen and a fellowship hall which made such occasions more enjoyable. Also in May 1963, a homecoming was held. The records do not show any such service before this. The five years passed much too quickly, and the church members and other town's people regretted losing Mr. Bridges and his attractive family.

The Reverend Arnold Pope came to the Franklinton Church in June, 1966. In addition to being a good preacher, he was also a good carpenter. Two of his projects were the remodeling of the church chancel and the lowering of the ceiling in a classroom off the vestibule of the church and converting this room into a study for the minister. It was during this year that the church was the recipient of a beautiful rose window given in memory of Mr. Aldridge Henley Vann. This was a beautiful addition to the sanctuary. Mr. Pope remained in Franklinton only one year leaving to go to Fayetteville Methodist College as Dean of Students and Professor of Religion.

In June, 1967, the North Carolina Conference sent the Reverend Don Lee Harris to Franklinton. The Methodist Youth Fellowship had begun to take on new life under Arnold Pope's leadership, and with the arrival of Mr. Harris, aided by his three daughters and son, it really began to flourish. There were too many young people of different ages in one group, and it was necessary to divide into a junior high and senior high group. It was during Mr. Harris's ministry that the Methodist Church united with the United Evangelical Brethren and became known as the United Methodist Church. The structure of the church changed, and many felt that such a change was a giant step forward. Mr. Harris called attention to the fact that many of the panes in the beautiful stained glass windows of the sanctuary were loose and needed fastening. This necessary repair called for skilled and expensive labor. Dr. and Mrs. Richard Whitfield generously paid for the repair. About this time, officers and members of the church were horrified to discover that the floor



of the "barely four-year old" Educational Building was eaving in. Excessive moisture, caused by a lack of ventilation, had caused sections of the floor to deteriorate. Part of the floor had to be replaced, which meant the wall to wall tile had to be removed. In its place, wall to wall carpeting was installed, and finally after some anxiety and inconvenience and an unexpected expense, it all added up to a happy ending.

Soon after Mr. Harris began work in Franklinton, he discovered in Mrs. Woodrow Haskins, one of his loyal members, a person who had had a long and active experience in Methodism. He prevailed upon her to assist him in his work. She rendered invaluable aid to him and her church throughout his stay and has continued this service without any remuneration until the present time (1970). After two years the Conference saw fit to move the Harris. This change was not looked upon with favor by the church membership.

In June, 1969, the Reverend Earl Richardson was welcomed as the new minister. Mr. Richardson lost no time in getting acquainted with his flock. He began visiting immediately, and before the year was out, he had been into the home of every church member. On his arrival at his new charge, he put into motion the operation of the new church structure. There was no longer an Official Board as there had been. In its place was set up a Council on Ministries and an Administrative Board. Mrs. Joe Whitaker and B. Napier Williamson, Jr. became the first chairman respectively of these two governing bodies of the church. The Council on Ministries met and made plans on all phases of church life, and the Administrative Board met quarterly and at called meetings to consider programs and plans presented by the Council on Ministries.

For many years the church roll had needed revising. The task was begun during Mr. Harris's stay and was completed during the first year of Mr. Richardson's ministry. When Mrs. R.J. Rose and Mrs. Woodrow Haskins began work on this project, there were 491 members on the church roll. 6 After many hours spent in research, the roll was reduced to 366. 7 There were names that should have been removed by transferral. There were names of those who had passed away, and there were numbers that were not representative of actual members. 8 Such a revision in the church roll presented a somewhat different picture.

An occasion worthy of note during Mr. Richardson's first year in Franklinton was a successful homecoming which was held the first Sunday in May. Many past members of the church returned to hear the Reverend Paul Carruth, District Superintendent of the Rocky Mount District and former pastor of the Franklinton United Methodist Church, deliver the sermon. Dinner was served in the Educational Building. The visitors and church members enjoyed a day of reunion and fellowship.

Mr. Richardson believed that youth should play a prominent role in the life of the church. For the first time members of the Methodist Youth Fellowship were active participant in meetings of the various boards and committees. They served on visitation teams, led in worship, and served as ushers. for two years in succession, representatives from the M.Y.F. participated in a United Nations Study Program, which they also helped finance. The Methodist young people invited the young people from the Franklinton Baptist Church to join with them in a drug study program. This informative and extensive study was a unique cooperative effort which was worthwhile to those who participated.

Near the end of the second year of Mr. Richardson's ministry, Mrs. Oza Cooke Cox, longtime organist and choir



director, passed away. Mrs. Cox had also served as a church school teacher and leader in the W.S.C.S., but she will be remembered longest for her contribution to the music of the church. Except for a few years when her children were little, she either sang in the choir or played the organ. New hymnals were given in memory of Mrs. Cox. and on May 16, 1971, an impressive service was held dedicating these hymnals to the glory of God and in loving memory of Mrs. Oza Cooke Cox for her devotion and loyalty to the Franklinton Methodist Church.

Mrs. Cathy May, who had served as assistant organist, followed Mrs. Cox as choir director and organist. Soon afterwards the choir members acquired beautiful new robes.

June, 1972, marked the end of the third year of Mr. Richardson's ministry in Franklinton. The members of the Franklinton United Methodist Church, under the able and enthusiastic leadership of their minister, anticipate continued success and progress as they move forward dedicated to the work of their Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.





## NOTES

1. Minutes of the Official Board, December 10, 1956, signed by Francis H. Eason.
2. Interview with B. Napier Williamson, Jr. Chairman of the Official Board 1957-59.
3. Resolution by the Quarterly Conference of the Franklinton Methodist Church, April 26, 1959, signed by George L. Cooke, Recording Steward and W.L. Clegg, Acting District Superintendent of the Methodist Church.
4. Deed to property.
5. Contract, dated November 15, 1963, by and between Board of Trustees of Franklinton Methodist Church and Mr. Arthur L. Evans, Contractor, and/or letter to the Reverend Lawrence Bridges from Charles W. Davis, Jr. Architect.
6. Charge Conference, "Report of Pastor" (June 6, 1969-March 22, 1970).
7. Council on Ministries and Charge Conference, "Annual Report of the Committee on Membership Audit", (June 6, 1969-May 17, 1970).
8. Ibid.



Mr. Richardson's fourth and last year on the Franklinton Charge included some important events of the life of the church. Of first importance is the Festival of Faith which was held from September 28 to October 1. Franklinton Methodist Church, the Franklinton Baptist Church, and the Union View Baptist Church joined together in this Lay Witness Mission. A team of approximately thirty lay witnesses led by Dr. Myers H. Hicks of Florence, S.C. arrived in Franklinton on Thursday afternoon and stayed until after dinner on Sunday. Each evening there was a service in one of the churches after which prayer meetings were held in twelve homes. Bible study was held each morning from 7:00 A.M. to 8:00 A.M. On Saturday there was a men's luncheon and a ladies' luncheon. Coffee hours were held, and there were special services for the youth. On Sunday after a service in each church, a fellowship dinner closed the Festival of Faith. All of those who had participated experienced spiritual renewal and those dedicated Christians who led the Mission will be remembered for a long time. Hopefully the evangelism program of the churches involved was affected in a very special way. Several groups began as an outgrowth of this Lay Witness Mission. There also existed a new spirit of love and cooperation among the churches.

Early in the year Mr. Richardson made the church aware that it was eligible to receive financial aid from the Duke Endowment. The last census had shown a decline in the town's population which caused the church to be classified as a rural church and eligible for money. In December the church was the recipient of \$10,000.00 from the Duke Endowment to be used to pay off the debt of the Educational Building.

March 25, 1973 was set as the day for the dedication of the Educational Building. It was also Homecoming, and many former members returned to join the celebration. Bishop Robert Blackburn delivered the address. Dr. R.C. Whitfield, Church Lay Leader, presented the building to Bishop Blackburn who accepted it and led the Litany of Dedication. It was a happy day for the Methodists of Franklinton when Mr. George L. Cooke, long time, faithful member burned the mortgage on the church's Educational Building. Others participating in this part of the ceremony were Edward A. Harris, III, Harriet Hight Mills, and the Reverend Lawrence Bridges who were present November 17, 1963 at the groundbreaking services. The Reverend Wilson Nesbit, the Reverend Earl Richardson and Bishop Robert M. Blackburn were also present. Following the burning of the mortgage, all those present enjoyed dinner together.

A highlight of the Service of Dedication was Nancy Best's announcement to the congregation of her acceptance of a call to the parish ministry. Nancy, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George Best, expressed her love and appreciation to the Franklinton Church. In her talk she announced her intention upon graduation from the seminary to join the North Carolina Conference. This a thrilling experience for Nancy, her family, and her friends.

Another memorable experience of the year was the opening and dedication of the Eleanor Vann Rose Library. For sometime there had been a need for library resources to enrich the program of the church. Because of her long years of service to the Franklinton Methodist Church it was fitting that the new library be dedicated to Mrs. R. J. Rose. She had been Communion Steward for fifty years, taking up this service in 1923 upon the death of her mother, the late Mrs. Bettie Henley Vann, who had been Communion Steward since 1883, a service she began after the death of her aunt, Martha Ann Moore Tucker. Mrs. Rose was also church historian. She had written a history of the Franklinton Methodist Church from its beginning in 1844 to 1955.



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On April 29, 1973, the new church library was dedicated to Mrs. Rose and was named the Eleanor Vann Rose Library. Miss Edith Jackson, chairman of the library committee, presented the library to the church, and it was accepted by Mr. Woodrow Haskins, chairman of the Administrative Board. There were 140 volumes in the library on the day of dedication. Hopefully the number will grow, and the church will be enriched as the members avail themselves of the opportunity to study and read materials that will nourish the soul as well as the mind.

Near the end of the church year, members were saddened by the passing of Mr. Calvin W. Brown, who had for many years worked faithfully as Sunday School teacher, Church School Superintendent, Board member, and Trustee. Memorial gifts for Mr. Brown poured in, and plans were made to install railings at the lower steps in front of the church in his memory.

At the end of the church year, much progress had been made in some areas, but there were needs in other areas. Financially the church was in good standing; the budget had been met, there were no building debts, and three outstanding notes had been paid. With these financial problems behind, attention was directed to an important and long overdue need. The next item of business must be a comprehensive program of renovation of the sanctuary. This was to be number one on the agenda after Conference. Mr. Richardson and the trustees had already made some preliminary plans in this area.

It was with regret that the membership learned that Earl Richardson was leaving. His ministry had made a deep impression. His sensitivity to the needs of his congregation and his untiring devotion and dedication to his church and his God will long remain in the memory of the Franklinton Parish.

Paul Leeland was assigned to the Franklinton United Methodist Church in June, 1973. He was also a student at Duke University. He served the church for only fifteen months, but in this short period he and his wife, Janet and daughter, Becky, endeared themselves to the church members. Mr. Leeland was young and related well to the youth and children, and the youth work grew during his ministry. It was during his ministry that the church offered its facilities to be used as a day care center for working mothers. He was influential in the church's becoming involved in this program of outreach. Mr. Leeland asked to be relieved of his duties in September 1974 to participate full time in a pastoral counseling program at Duke University. It was with regret that the congregation accepted his resignation.

In October 1974 the Reverend Johnie Joyce, a retired minister living in Henderson, N.C., agreed to serve the Franklinton church until Conference would convene the next June. He commuted to Franklinton while a new furnace and central air conditioning were being installed in the parsonage. As soon as these were completed, he and his wife, Lou moved into the parsonage. Johnie immediately began visiting his members, and it wasn't long before he had been into every home. Lou joined the choir and became an active member of the Ruth Mercer Circle. A happy relationship existed between the Joyces and the church. Everyone was pleased that the interim pastor and his wife seemed so happy in Franklinton, and the membership was delighted when word was received that the Conference had agreed to allow him to continue his ministry here. But this good fortune was short lived. In July a serious illness made it impossible for him to continue his ministry. The Joyces departure was a disappointment, but it was agreed that the Joyces brief stay in Franklinton had been a blessing.

There had been some concern about the protection of the stained glass windows, and it was while Mr. Joyce was



minister that the Administrative Board voted to spend \$5,265 to put protective glass over the windows.

Once again the Franklinton church was without a minister in the middle of the church year. This was the third time this writer can recall this situation had occurred. Danny Allen, who was serving the Ebenezer-Piney Grove charge was appointed by the District Superintendent to the Franklinton Charge. He and his wife and child moved into the parsonage in January 1976. At the time, he was also a student at the Southern Seminary at Wake Forest. Danny was an attractive young man who brought youth and vitality to the church. It wasn't long before he had reorganized the youth group, and during his stay the youth work flourished.

At his first Administrative Board meeting plans were made for a churchwide visitation program. Mrs. G.L. Appleford, Chairman of the Commission on Evangelism, headed up the program. The success of the visitation campaign resulted in a larger attendance at church and more new people attending.

Mr. and Mrs. Thurston Cooper presented an American Flag to the church in the spring of 1976, and soon thereafter the Rose Wesley Class presented the Christian Flag. These two beautiful flags were placed near the altar. Boxwoods, given by Edith Jackson in memory of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. T.J. Jackson, were planted in front of the church. The youth under the leadership of Mrs. Jimmy Brown and Nancy Davis presented a handsome table and pariments for the worship center. All these gifts, given to the glory of God, added beauty to the sanctuary.

On October 3, 1976, Homecoming was held. A former pastor, the Reverend Al Fisher, preached for the occasion. Many former members and friends returned and enjoyed a time of remembering and fellowship.

In December 1976 the Franklinton church had its first Christmas tree. The children and young people under the direction of Mrs. Kent Mosley worked for many months to design the beautiful Christmas trees. A service was held the first Sunday in December to light the tree and explain the symbols.

Jimmy Brown, a trustee, continued to be generous to the church. He furnished the choir room with a handsome table and chairs. He also gave other beautiful pieces of furniture and pictures. Jimmy gave of his time and money to repair, paint, and restore many areas of the church and parsonage.

In June 1977 the conference made the decision to move Danny Allen from the Franklinton charge. In the short time in the charge he had provided strong and positive leadership, and he would be missed.

R. Norman Knight was the next minister assigned to the Franklinton church. He and his wife Ruby moved into the parsonage in June 1977. Ruby was an accomplished musician. She sang in the choir and when needed played the organ during church service.

The Franklinton charge was eligible under the Duke Endowment to have a student from the Duke Divinity School to work with the minister. Donnie Lloyd was the first student assigned. He stayed from October 1977 until April 1978. He was paid by the Duke Endowment and the Franklinton church and Wesley Chapel shared his expenses. He was in the parish



on Sundays and worked in both churches assisting the pastor..

Another Duke student to serve with Mr. Knight was Bob Bushong. His time extended from the fall to the end of the next summer. Under Bob's leadership, assisted by Jackie and Curt Hedrick, the youth group made great strides. There were many activities during the year, one being a trip to Florida. This program included the young people in both churches in the charge. Paul Mickie and Greg Golden were also assigned to assist Reverend Knight. These young men not only worked with the youth, but they also visited the sick and shut-ins and occasionally preached.

The ladies of the Rose Wesley Class had been for years the mainstay of the Sunday School. This class could write a history all its own. For years they had prepared and served suppers in the church and had contributed in nearly every activity of the church. They had donated their own money and they had earned money to help whenever there was a need. To help out in a time of financial difficulty, these ladies had cleaned the church for two years. They also paid \$300 to help purchase a rug for the assembly room leaving \$450 for the church to pay. Mrs. R.W. Moore taught the class for many years.

For two summers instead of the traditional Church School the children under the leadership of Mrs. J.B. Dixon and Mrs. R.C. Whitfield participated in a traveling Church School. They visited a number of places within driving distance that are important to Methodism, such as Duke University, Louisburg College Green Hill (home of the first Methodist Conference) the Children's Home in Raleigh, and the Methodist Retirement Home in Durham.

The choir under the direction of Mrs. Bruce Honeycutt and choir members: Mrs. Charlie Hight, Mrs. Phil Whitfield, Mrs. Brodie Green, Mrs. Carl Gilliam, Mrs. Onda Kearney, Mrs. Norman Knight, Joe Whitaker, and Vincent Kearney gave unselfishly of their time and talent to provide beautiful music every Sunday during the worship service. The choir members felt the need for a new organ. Under the guidance of the minister and with the cooperation of other church members, they began a drive to get donations, memorials, and pledges. Some years earlier Mrs. Norris Collins had contributed \$1,000 to be used for a new organ. Everyone joined in enthusiastically, and on June 28, 1979, the Administrative Board voted to purchase an electronic Baldwin organ. The organ was priced at \$16,663. The church would receive a 15% discount. The organ committee was authorized to borrow the money from the First Citizens Bank. The committee and the church members expected to be able to pay for the organ within three years.

The Ruth Mercer Circle undertook a project to put cushions in the sanctuary. These women worked hard for many months to get the money. There were donations from members and friends, and they held money making projects. Finally this dream was realized, and the cushions added to the beauty and comfort of the sanctuary.

There was a need for a structured stewardship program, and at the advice of Reverend Knight, the Administrative Board voted to use a drive called the Pony Express. This drive was carried out for two years and a similar one, the Circuit Rider, the third year during Mr. Knight's ministry. These drives were successful, and for the first time in many years, the church year ended with no financial difficulties. The church treasurer, Richard Golightly, and the financial secretary, Mrs. Charlie Hight, had for many years managed the finances of the church. Their loyal service was a blessing to the church.







In 1979 Jimmy Brown purchased a used bus for the church. His generosity included buying the license and providing the gas. He also installed a speaker system in the sanctuary. In 1980 on a Sunday after church, he served dinner to all present and provided a musical program afterwards.

Some of the older members could remember going to Raleigh or to Tar River on picnics when they were children. Such occasions were history until the Methodist Campground at Kerr Lake. This was a time of fun and fellowship for those who attended.

In the fall of 1980 and 1981 the church held a bazaar. Mrs. Leroy Bigham was chairman both years. The first year \$2,883.87 was cleared and the second year \$893.59.

Homecoming was held April 5, 1981 and Lawrence Bridges, a former pastor, returned to deliver the sermon. Dinner was served in the Educational Building to members and friends who returned for the occasion.

On May 10, 1939 the Franklinton charge had been established, and since then the pastor had served the Franklinton Church and Wesley Chapel, a nearby church in a rural area. In the spring of 1981, Dr. Reginald Ponder, the Raleigh District Superintendent, visited the Franklinton charge to ask the charge to add a third church, Ebenezer, another church in a rural area. Ebenezer and Piney Grove were being served by a student pastor, but a change had to be made, and each church would be put into another charge. Dr. Ponder assured the charge that one Duke Endowment student would be assigned permanently to the pastor to serve as assistant. Formerly Franklinton had been paying 85% and Wesley Chapel 15% of the Conference asking and pastor's salary. In the new plan Franklinton would pay 65%, Wesley 15%, and Ebenezer 20%. Each month the pastor would preach three Sundays at Franklinton, two Sundays at Wesley Chapel and one Ebenezer. The assistant would preach the other Sundays at the respective churches. Not everyone was in favor of the plan, but it was accepted and would begin in June, 1981.

Norman Knight had served the Franklinton charge for four years and according to the Methodist system, the time had come for him to be moved to another church. Members and friends would remember him and his dedication for a long time.

In the 1981 North Carolina Conference, Clay Smith was assigned to the Franklinton charge. In June, Clay and his wife, Ruth, and son, John Mark, moved into the parsonage. Clay had been known throughout the Conference as one keenly interested in the small church, and his coming to Franklinton was timely and challenging as he was the first to pastor the three charge parish.

During his stay in Franklinton, he was assisted by Greg Golden, Rick Haverly, and Mike Kurtz - students at Duke University.

Very soon after Clay and his family arrived, the church was blessed by the arrival of another ministerial family. The Reverend W.L. Sturtevant retired from the Virginia conference, and he and his wife, Marie, joined our fellowship. They immediately became active in the church and were a great help to the minister and a real asset to the church.



About the same time the church and the choir were happy to welcome Dave and Cathy Benson. They joined the choir and contributed greatly to the music. During the time the regular organist and choir director was out because of illness in the family, Cathy played the organ and Dave directed the choir. It was during this time that Mrs. R.C. Whitfield joined the choir.

Although Clay served the church only two years, his dedication, sincerity and industriousness were attributes that will long be remembered.

Two outstanding accomplishments while he was here were the revision of the church roll and the establishment of the Franklinton Christian Service Center. Clay and the Chairman of Membership, Edith Jackson, spent many hours updating the roll and seeking out and correcting addresses of non-resident members. As a result this revised roll of resident and non-resident members was made available to church members.

Early in 1982 Mrs. Charles Fuller, Chairman of Christian Unity, reported that twenty-four people representing nine local churches had met with the idea of helping the needy in the community. This was the beginning of the Franklinton Christian Service Center. Clay Smith was very active in this venture and was able to get a grant of \$1,900.00 from the North Carolina Conference. Mrs. Fuller (Gwen) served as director for two years.

Two other events were memorable. A mission Saturation weekend was held February 19-21. Six missionaries shared experiences and stories of United Methodist Missions. A Lay Witness Mission was held the weekend of September 24-26. Bill and Marie Sturtevant served as chairpersons of the Mission, and they and their committee worked for months preparing for this event. A team of dedicated lay people led by Dr. Robert W. Moye shared their faith for three days. This experience left a lasting impression on many people in the Franklinton Methodist Church. One outgrowth of this was a weekly prayer group led by Dave Benson and Bill Sturtevant. It was during the Mission that Dave and Cathy Benson witnessed to their faith in a deeply moving way.

At the Administrative Council meeting in November 1982, Joe Whitaker, Co-Chairman of the Board of Trustees, reported that the trustees had met with the Duke Endowment representative to discuss church building renovations. Joe presented a detailed report of the many, many improvements to preserve and enhance the beauty of the church building. The Board authorized the Trustees to employ an architect and to proceed towards this goal.

It was in February 1983 when the church members learned that Clay Smith would be leaving in June. His decision was unexpected and the members were disappointed and saddened. Nevertheless, Clay, continued his strong leadership until the end.

The Carpet Fund, which the Methodist Men had set up, received a real boost in March 1983. Mrs. Robert Wheeler contributed \$1,000.00 to it in memory of her husband, Robert, a long time faithful member of the church.

A lot which had been given to the church by the R.D.Collins family was sold for \$5,000.00 to Devero Martin. The money was put into the Building Fund.

The Duke Endowment approved the plans for the church renovation, and at a church conference held on March 22, 1983, the Administrative Council approved the plans presented. Bruce Honeycutt was elected chairman of the Building



program. Others on the committee were Scott Allen, Laverne Appleford, Mrs. I. L. Bigam, Jr., Pinkney Cheatham, Mrs. Curt Hedrick, Mrs. Charles Hight, Mrs. D.O. Langston, Warren Nesbit, Pete Osborne, A.J. Perkinson, Joe Whitaker, and Phil Whitfield.

On April 22, 1983, a letter arrived announcing that Annie Glenn Cheatham Hall had bequeathed \$500,000.00 to the Franklinton United Methodist Church in memory of her parents, Richard Isham Cheatham and Luna Furman Cheatham. Mrs. Hall's parents were natives of Franklinton. Their families had been active in the Franklinton Church for many years. The Cheatham and Furman names are found in the church history as early as 1845. Although Annie C. Hall never lived in Franklinton, her parents left a legacy of memories of their hometown church, and she in turn memorialized them and herself by leaving her material wealth to her church in Norfolk, Virginia and the Franklinton church that her parents loved so much.

This unexpected blessing had the effect of thrilling and humbling the members of the church. The words of the pastor the following Sunday voiced the sentiment of everyone. "To whom much is given, much is required".

The decision was made to put the money in the Methodist Foundation and to let that financial branch of the church administer it. The Administrative Council voted to take \$50,000.00 to be used to grant scholarships to worthy young people who would be attending Louisburg College. These scholarships would be known as the Richard I. Cheatham and Luna Furman Cheatham Scholarship. Only the interest would be used, and this would be a perpetual memorial to Mrs. Hall's parents.

One of the last events held before the Smiths would be leaving was an unusual birthday party. This was a birthday celebration for all church members. Twelve tables were set up and were appropriately decorated for the twelve months of the year. A birthday cake graced each table. Those attending sat at the table of his or her birthday. Games were played and afterwards ice cream and cake were served. A time of fellowship and fun was enjoyed by all.

Then came the last Sunday in May, and it was time to say goodbye to Clay, Ruth and John Mark. They had been honored the previous Sunday night at a covered dish supper. Clay was taking a leave of absence from the ministry, and he and his family were moving to Burlington.

The Smiths moved out of the parsonage two weeks before the new minister arrived, giving the church the opportunity to make some much needed improvements. The kitchen and bath rooms were wallpapered, all the other walls were painted, carpeting was installed, and a new stove and dryer were purchased. All was ready for the new preacher and his family.

But something out of the ordinary happened. In June 1983, the North Carolina Conference appointed a woman to the Franklinton charge. Never before had this happened, and this decision by the Conference created a great deal of conversation by church members and others in the community. To say everybody was pleased would be untrue, and to say everybody was displeased would be equally untrue. But the powers that be had spoken, and the membership pledged to support the new minister whoever she or he would be. She was the Reverend Geraldine Ingram, former Associate Minister





of Epworth United Methodist Church in Durham. On June 16 she with her husband, the Reverend O. Kelly Ingram, a professor in the Duke Divinity School, and her four children: Melanie, Tom, Greg and Doug moved into the parsonage. Not much time passed before one and all were applauding the wisdom of the Conference in sending Gerry, as she wanted to be called, to Franklinton. Her warmth, loving spirit and diligence won her a place in everyone's heart.

Immediately Gerry found herself thrust into a renovation program that had grown bigger than anyone expected. Pinkney Chatham succeeded Bruce Honeycutt as chairman. The contract was let to Roberson Construction Company of Henderson for \$102,000.00. James M. Stevenson of the Duke Endowment was the architect. The renovation included a new slate roof over a portion of the Sunday School and repairs to other portions of the roof, a covered walkway from the church to the Educational Building, painting the exterior and interior, ramp at the front, carpeting, cathedral lights, two new bathrooms, a new furnace and air conditioning. The work began in July, and it was December before everything was back to normal. Nearly every day during these months Laverne Appleford's blue van could be seen in front of the church. It would be difficult to count the many volunteer hours he spent overseeing the project. His constant vigilance probably saved the church in many ways. Three Sunday services had to be held in the Educational Building because of the work.

The Charge Conference was held November 17 preceded by a covered dish supper, with the District Superintendent, Tommy Smith, presiding. The minister used a slide presentation for her report. There was a large attendance, and everyone enjoyed the pictorial reviewing of the past year. Many expressed the opinion that this was the most enjoyable Charge Conference that they could remember.

The church owned two pianos, neither in good condition. The choir wanted a piano for the sanctuary. Their feeling was that the old pianos could be traded in, and with donations it would be possible to buy one and maybe two new pianos. Many generous people arose to the occasion. Eleanor Rose Booke donated a baby grand piano for the sanctuary in memory of her parents, Eleanor Vann Rose and Robert Jordan Rose. With the sale of the pianos and other donations and pledges, the church was able to buy a piano for the Educational Building. Robert Winston of Charlotte made a generous donation in memory of his sister, Ella Winston Coulter.

In the spring of 1984, John H. Harris, a well known landscape architect was employed to draw plans for the grounds of the church. Ogburn Landscaping Service was hired to complete the job.

Other renovation was needed at the Educational Building and the parsonage. The exterior wooded surfaces of both buildings were covered with vinyl and new gutters and downspouts were installed. At the parsonage drainage pipes were put into the ground, and a new cement driveway was poured.

Tommy Dement, who lived next to the church, deeded a lot to the church that was located across the street. It was hoped that eventually this lot could be turned into church parking area.

A beautiful silver Communion Service was presented in memory of Mrs. A.S. Powell by her daughters, Mrs. John Adams and Mrs. Titus Ward.



Many material blessings had been received during the year. It had been a time of refurbishing and beautifying the church property. The church was one hundred and forty years old, and it was time to celebrate and give thanks to God. September 30, 1984 was set as the day of celebration. It would be a homecoming, and anniversary and an day of thanksgiving to God for the many blessings that had been bestowed on the Franklinton United Methodist Church.

September 30, 1984 was a red letter day at the Franklinton United Methodist Church. It was the celebration of its one hundred fortieth anniversary. Former ministers, former members, and friends of the church joined the membership for this memorable day. The Reverend Al Fisher, former pastor, preached the homecoming sermon. Everyone enjoyed the fellowship and a dinner served in the Educational Building. On display were pictures, relics, and other memorabilia representing the one hundred forty years of the church's existence. It was truly an time of thanksgiving, remembering, and celebrating the great heritage of the church.

Dr. Allen Norris, President of Louisburg College, was present at the church on November 18, 1984 to receive the Cheatham Endowment Scholarship. It was presented to him by Mrs. R.C. Whitfield, Chairperson of the Endowment Committee. This scholarship represented \$50,000.00 from the Annie C. Hall estate. It was set up as a memorial to Mrs. Hall's parents and was named the Richard I. and Luna F. Cheatham Scholarship Fund. the interest from the money would aid deserving students at Louisburg College. The college would select the recipients, but the church would reserve the right to make recommendations for candidates from the Franklinton United Methodist Church, Franklinton High School, Franklin County, or others approved by the college in stated order. The funding was to be placed with the Louisburg College Financial Aid Office annually by the Methodist Foundation. The first recipient of the scholarship was Joan Hagwood, a graduate of Franklinton High School.

In April 1984 the church voted to allow Alcoholics Anonymous, Al-Anon, and Al-A-Teens to meet once a week in the Education Building. Most of the church members were pleased that this community outreach in addition to the day care center and the Christian Service Center were activities held in their church.

Other programs set in motion or accomplished during Gerry Ingram's ministry included a tape ministry to shut-ins, formation of an Altar Guild to aid the pastor and the Chairman of Worship, purchase of a copy machine, and a pictorial directory. For fun and fellowship there were a community Easter Egg Hunt, a church birthday party, a dinner honoring the older members of the church, and a spaghetti supper.

The church membership was saddened to learn that Gerry would leave in June 1985 to become Administrator of the Methodist Retirement Home in Durham. To say that the people were disappointed would be an understatement. Gerry's strong leadership, good preaching, and loving spirit were memories that would be cherished for a long time. Kelly Gerry's husband, had given unselfishly of his time and energy to the ministry of the Franklinton Charge, and he would be missed to.

The next minister assigned to the Franklinton Church was the Reverend Randy Lee Wall, who came from the Burlington District. He, his wife Donna, and their daughters, Heather, aged six; and Ginger, aged two moved into the parsonage in June 1985.



One of Randy's first concerns was the Sunday School. He with the help of Steve Long, the associate pastor, began to plan for Sunday School revitalization and improvement. On the last Sunday in September a new adult Sunday School program was started. The emphasis on the church school resulted in a 10% increase in attendance.

The Franklinton Church has had many attractive and able students from the Duke Divinity School. One, Steve Long, who came in the fall of 1984 remained the entire year. He and his wife, Ricka, were loved by everyone. Through his leadership a Church Vacation Bible School was held for the first time in several years, a shepherding program was developed, and a young adult Sunday School Class was formed. Steve's presence through the transition period of the church in ministers was helpful.

Soon after Randy arrived, the church secretary, Sandy O'Hara, resigned. Sandy, who began work in August 1983, was the first secretary the church had employed. She had been a real asset, and her departure was a loss. Linda Payne was hired to take her place.

Richard Golightly, who had served as church treasurer for twenty-one and one-half years, resigned as of January 1986. His resignation was a great loss. His faithful and efficient service to his church had been a blessing. He was honored at a church service for his loyalty and dedication.

In March 1986 the last payment on the indebtedness of the removal of the church properties was made. This was done by borrowing from the Endowment Fund. This debt would be repaid as soon as the interest from the fund would be available.

A service of dedication and thanksgiving was held April 13, 1986. Former members and ministers joined in the celebration. Bishop C.P. Minnick, Jr. delivered the sermon. Tommy Smith, the District Superintendent, and Al Fisher, representing the Duke Endowment were present. Among those present were Gerry Ingram and Clay Smith, the ministers who were leaders during the period of the removal. Dinner was served after the service in the Educational Building. This was truly a day of celebration and thanksgiving to God for His many blessings.

The church learned in May that Randy Wall would be leaving at Conference time (June 1986). He would have served the Franklinton Charge only one year, and he had served it well. During the twelve months he had preached the Word of God, had ministered to the needs of the membership, had provided pastoral leadership to the general administration of the three churches on the charge, and had presided over the celebration of a service of dedication and thanksgiving for the extensive renovation of the church property. A new circle, named the Friendship Circle had been organized, made up of the younger ladies of the church. Dena McFarland, a Duke Divinity student, had worked with him.

The Reverend Michael Ayers Davis was appointed to the Franklinton Charge at the 1986 Annual conference. Mike, as he liked to be called; his wife Karen, and two children, Michelle age twelve, and John age four, moved into the parsonage the latter part of June.

It wasn't long before Mike had visited most of the members, especially the shut-ins, and was accepted with







warmth and affection by the members of the church. Once again the Lord had blessed Franklinton United Methodist by sending a minister who was a good preacher and pastor and a dedicated man of God. Karen, Mike's wife, joined the choir, and her contribution to the music of the church was greatly appreciated.

During the first two years of his pastorate the Reverend Davis took in twenty-seven new members. The increase in membership not only brought about great rejoicing but also caused the Administrative Board to feel that the time had come to request the North Carolina Conference to make the Franklinton Church a station. The consensus was that because of the membership growth and the potential for more growth, there existed a need for a full time minister.

On March 8, 1987 Mattie Whitaker, Chairman of the Administrative Board, appointed a task force to study the issue and make a recommendation. The members of the committee were Edith Jackson, Alice Bigham, A.B. Allen, Jr., Phil Whitfield, Richard Golightly, and Dale Byrns. Matt Whitaker and Mike Davis were to serve also. After some study and meetings on this matter, the committee sent a letter to Dr. Joseph Bethea, the Raleigh District Superintendent, requesting that the Franklinton United Methodist Church be made a station church. Dr Bethea was cooperative and encouraging. In the fall he came to Franklinton to meet with members from the three churches on the charge. At the Charge Conference in October, Dr bethea announced that as of that date, unless unforeseen circumstances caused a change, the Franklinton United Methodist Church would become a station church with a full time minister, Wesley Chapel and Ebenezer would be a charge and the Reverend William L. Sturtevant would be appointed there. In June 1988 the North Carolina Conference declared the Franklinton United Methodist Church a station and sent Mike Davis back as the full time minister, On July 2, 1988 the church celebrated with a special service the realization of this dream. God continues to bless our church.

In 1987 the Administrative Board voted to support Hinton Rural Life with a \$1,000 contribution from the Endowment Fund. The director, Clay Smith, had been a former minister of our church.

In 1988 Jeff and Eleanor Lockwood, members of the church, were accepted by the Board of Foreign Missions to go to Burundi in Africa as agricultural missionaries. So far as we know, they are the first missionaries from the Franklinton Church. There was a feeling of pride and humility that this dedicated couple would be spreading the love of God in this distant land.

In November 1988 Linda Payne, the church secretary, resigned. She was replaced by Marie Talley.

Students from the Duke Divinity School who assisted Mike Davis in 1986-1987 were Andy Lambert, Nancy Hutter, Mike Sluder and Alex Stevenson.

For years the church has enjoyed beautiful music rendered by dedicated and loyal choir members: the organist and choir director, Miriam Honcycutt; assistant, Karen Davis; choir members, Mary Elizabeth Green, Mary Wade Kearney,



Lura Hight, Sue Gilliam, Sarah Whitfield, Bertha Whitfield, Veronica Fuller, Dale Byrns, Joe Whitaker, Douglas Mitchell.

On April 3, 1988, Easter Sunday, something new was added. This was the day of the first performance of the Hand Bell Choir. The bells were dedicated at the eleven o'clock service. Karen Davis was the director, and the ringers were Lura Hight, Miriam Honeycutt, Mary Elizabeth Green, Mary Wade Kearney, Beth Whitfield, Sue Gilliam, Sarah Whitfield, Michelle Williams, Dale and Kathy Byrns. One year later, April 7, 1989, a second bell choir played at the church service. Those in this group were Veronica Fuller, Danny Fuller, Pattie Harris, Mike Davis, Michelle Williams, Cecelia Rowland, Sandy O'Hara and Terry Southard. The bells were purchased with memorial gifts and contributions.

For a long time the brick work of the church had needed attention. In the summer of 1988 a company out of Charlotte worked for several weeks cleaning the bricks, patching the mortar, and painting the exterior. By the end of the summer the outside of the church boasted a real face lift. Phil Whitfield, Chairman of the Trustees, spent many hours overseeing this project.

A directory was published in 1988, the second in the history of the church.

In addition to financial support for Hinton Rural Life and the Lockwoods, missionaries to Africa, funds from the Endowment Fund were given as follows: \$1000.00 to the Franklinton Rescue Squad, \$500.00 to Mt. Mariah and \$500.00 to Harris Chapel, churches damaged by a tornado.

On August 7, 1988 a handsome baptismal font was dedicated to the memory of Leonard W. Henderson, given by his wife Josephine Henley Henderson. The late Mr. Henderson, a life long member of the Methodist Church, had given many years of dedicated service to the church.

During the summer of 1989 more work was done on the church. The outside was water-proofed, the inside was painted, and work was done in the choir loft.

Marie Talley, church secretary, resigned in July 1989, and Karen Davis was hired for that position.

During the year the church was remembered in the wills of two deceased members, Mrs. Robert Wheeler and Mr. Walter Kittle.

The New United Methodist Hymnals were used for the first time October 8, 1989. There was a special service of dedication to the glory of God in honor and memory of:

Leonard W. & Josephine Henley Henderson	Lala Fields
Lillie T. Parker	Jack T. Ayscue
Archie Brown Allen, Sr.	Dora V. Harris
Cornelia Barbour Allen	Ethel Honeycutt
Hal Tharrington Harris	Robert Nowell
Mr. & Mrs. Lewis Thompson, Sr.	Maude Medlin



Dr. Richard C. Whitfield  
Paul Walton Smith  
Jack T. Ayscue, Jr.

Eric Medlin  
Lona Ayscue  
T.V. Pruitt, Sr.

At the same service New Revised Standard Pew Bibles were dedicated to the glory of God in memory of William T. (Tom) and Ethel Honeycutt. These were given by Bruce and Miriam Honeycutt. This was a very memorable service.

The members of the Franklinton United Methodist Church had looked forward to October 22, 1989 with great anticipation. This was the day the church would celebrate its One Hundred Forth-Fifth Anniversary. Former members and ministers and friends returned for the Eleven O'Clock Service. It was a time of thanksgiving and celebration. There was special music from the choir and the two handbell choirs. The Reverend Albert F. Fisher, a former pastor, preached the Homecoming Sermon. The Historical Committee had printed a fourteen page photo booklet of the church to be distributed to those attending. Historical artifacts and framed photographs of former ministers were on display in the Sunday School Assembly Room. One collection of photographs went as far back as 1848. Dinner was served in the Fellowship Hall to those attending, and there was a specially decorated cake commemorating the 145th Anniversary of the church. Everyone agreed that it was a day of remembering and a day to remember.

The members of the Historical Committee: Edith Jackson, Alice Bigham, Mike Davis, Danny Fuller, Charlie Hight, Mattille Whitaker, Sarah Whitfield.

Most Franklinton Methodists agreed that the 145th anniversary celebration was the highlight of 1989, but 1990 was also filled with blessings. Phil Whitfield, a long time member of the church, had spent several years making stained glass to be put in the church. Phil, with the help of Ed Harris, installed the glass windows between the sanctuary and the Sunday School Assembly Room. These stained glass windows were presented to the church as a love gift from Phil and Sarah Whitfield. They are beautiful and are there to be enjoyed for years to come. To quote John Keats, "A thing of beauty is a joy forever." That verse describes the windows. Phil is continuing to design glass for other windows in the church.

The North Carolina Conference selected the Franklinton Church to participate in the Revitalization Program. Only seventy churches out of 270 that applied were chosen. Pat Lykins was the consultant assigned to the church. The first meeting was in January 1990. Committees were appointed, and more meetings were held. An active visitation program was put into place. The two priorities selected concerned children and senior citizens. Parties were held to celebrate the birthdays of the children in the Day Care, housed in the Franklinton United Methodist Church. Volunteers called bingo at the Louisburg Manor every Tuesday, alternating morning and evening. The Mission Statement that developed from the program is as follows:

#### MISSION STATEMENT

In response to the love of Christ, the Franklinton United Methodist Church is called to be the inclusive caring body of Christ in our world today.





We will be a strongly mission oriented congregation that seeks to reach out to meet the hopes and hurts in our community.

We will endeavor to show our commitment to Christ and one another by building an intentional ministry to persons of all ages, particularly the young, elderly, and homeless.

The impersonal nature of our society creates a need for the Church to offer an opportunity to experience true friendship, where joys are celebrated and burdens shared.

We seek to make God's love visible by being a warm supportive fellowship of people who are charged to actively witness to our faith by being involved in the loves of others.

On February 4, Jeff and Eleanor Lockwood, former church members, who were serving in the mission field in Burundi, Africa, visited the church to show slides and tell about their work. Their son, Charles, was baptized during the service.

An Open House Sunday Service was held on March 18. Every member was asked to invite a guest or guests. Reverend Davis invited the AA members and the Day Care Parents. After the service a social hour was held in the Educational Building.

A Lay Witness Mission led by Tom Walden was held from March 6-8. A number of delegates came for the weekend. There were coffee hours, luncheons, and cook-outs. Beside the food and fellowship a spiritual atmosphere prevailed.

Olive Crews Kinchloe gave a Paschal Candle to the church in memory of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Elvin Crews.

At the beginning of the year (1990), Reverend Davis reported there were 269 members on the church roll. Thirteen new members were added during the year and four members were lost by death.

Phil F. Whitfield was selected as Lay Person of the year.

Prayers for peace had been answered, and early in 1991 the Gulf War came to an end. Under the leadership of the Reverend Michael Davis, the church continued to grow in numbers and hopefully to fulfill its mission.

In February at the Patron's Banquet, Dr Allen Norris, President of Louisburg College, presented a plaque to the Franklinton United Methodist Church in appreciation of the support of Louisburg College through the scholarship program established in memory of Richard Isham Cheatham and Luna Furman Cheatham.

It was a great disappointment to learn that Miriam Gonella Honcycutt, organist and choir director for seventeen years, would be leaving her post at the end of July. From 1974 to 1991, she had served faithfully and well. Her contribution to the music of the church would never be forgotten. On July 28th. she was presented a plaque and a gift in appreciation of her dedicated service.



Karen Davis agreed to serve as interim organist and choir director until a replacement could be found. Mrs. Davis, the wife of Reverend Mike Davis, had been a member of the choir, and she directed the bell choir.

The cornerstone of the Franklinton Church was laid on August 5, 1891. The first service in the new church was held on October 2, 1892. To celebrate the one hundredth birthday of the sanctuary, a party was held. It was an enjoyable occasion for young and old.

Nearly ten years had passed since Annie Glenn Cheatham, whose parents had been members of the Franklinton Church, had bequeathed \$500,000 to their church. She had requested no recognition for herself, but the Administrative Board voted to name the breezeway between the church and the Educational Building for her.

The church received an anonymous gift of \$1000 to be used for children's ministry.

To beautify the grounds in front of the church, Marie and Harry Talley planted geraniums.

In 1991 Edith Jackson was chosen Lay Person of the Year.

Thomas Soloman who lived in Raleigh was selected by the Administrative Board to be organist and choir director to begin the first Sunday in January of 1992. The Board sent a letter of appreciation to Karen Davis for serving in that position during the interim

Some church members felt that in addition to the Administrative Board there should be a Council on Ministries. With this Council there would be more time and opportunity to utilize more members to carry out more programs for the spiritual growth of the church. In the past there had been a Council on Ministries, but it was discontinued. In January 1992, the first meeting of the new Council was held.

Another first was the organization of the Senior Ministries. Bertha Whitfield was the first leader of the group which met once a month for a program or a trip.

It was at the February 1992 Board meeting that Reverend Mike Davis announced that he would be leaving in June. Mike had served the church for six years, longer than any other minister except for Reverend S.E. Mercer, who served thirteen years. Board members expressed their regrets that the church would lose a minister who had meant so much to so many, had given such strong spiritual leadership, and had brought growth to the church. June 21st. was Mike's last Sunday, and it was with regret that the Franklinton Methodists bade him farewell. His wife, Karen, had sung in the choir, played the organ, organized and directed the bell choir, and had served as church secretary. The church would miss her talent and contributions.

The Reverend William V. Taylor and his wife Robin and son Joshua moved into the parsonage on June 23, 1992. His first Sunday was June 28. Rev. Taylor had come from the Burlington District. At his first Administrative Board meeting he expressed appreciation for the cordial reception the church had given him and his family. He shared with the Board his hopes and aspirations for the future of the Franklinton United Methodist Church.



Linda Payne, a former church secretary, agreed to serve in that capacity until a permanent replacement could be found. In July Asilee Leonard was hired for the job.

The trustees found it necessary to work on the parsonage, which included painting, cleaning, installing locks, repairing furniture and electrical appliances, and doing yard work. It was also necessary to repair the roof of the sanctuary, a job that cost \$9,443.00.

Three mission studies were held: one on Japan, led by Ialeen Mode, another on the book of John, led by Reverend Taylor, and We Belong Togher: Women in Solidarity, led by Alice Bigham.

Alice Bigham had been selected as Lay Person of the Year. That in itself was an honor. What made it more of an honor for Alice and the Franklinton United Methodist Church was that at the District Lay Rally she was chosen Lay Person of the Year of the Raleigh District.

After serving as Chairperson of the Board of Trustees for a number of years Phil Whitfield was succeeded by Brodie Green early in 1993. Brodie expressed appreciation to Phil for his many years of dedicated service. Everyone echoed that sentiment.

Marie Sturtevant, Chairperson of Evangelism, began a Shepherd Program and a telephone prayer chain in January 1993.

Robin Taylor was active in children's work. She organized a Children's Church and a group called TUMY, meaning The Upcoming Methodist Youth.

There was need for financial support for the new town library. The Franklinton church pledged \$1500, to be paid over a period of three years.

In March of 1993 Thom Solomon resigned to become organist and choir director in a Raleigh church. Diane Penrose, a music teacher at Franklinton Elementary School agreed to serve as interim until Dr. Candace Bailey could take the position.

To be in line with the Franklin County Planning and Fire Inspection Department, any room housing children under age three must have an outside exit. Mrs. Ruth Fishel, Director of the Day Care, was given permission to install three doors, one on either side of the front door of the Educational Building. All expenses were borne by the Day Care.

For a long time there had been a need for some kind of transportation for the church. After much thought and planning, a decision was made to purchase a van. There was concern about how to finance this project. The decision was made to borrow money from the Endowment Fund with the idea of repaying the money. Some gifts and pledges had already been made. The van would transport fifteen passengers. Rules and regulations were drawn up, and it wasn't long before the van was in use. Alice Bigham and her two sons, Lamar and Ike, gave a Memorial gift of \$1,000 to the van fund in loving memory of Isaac Leroy Bigham, Jr., whose great love was to young people and their activities.





This was the year to sponsor a bazaar during the Barbecued Chicken Dinner. Robin Taylor worked diligently to make this project a success. She had the support of women in the church. The amount raised was over \$2,000.00.

The Methodist Youth Fellowship, under the leadership of Rowena and Bruce Ball, published a cookbook. In addition to recipes they had collected, they included those from a cookbook published in 1962 by the Ruth Mercer Circle.

Danny Fuller donated a beautiful antique cabinet for the choir room to be used for the choir and clerical robes.

In addition to the traditional Christmas programs (caroling, cantata, Christmas dinner in honor of new members, children programs, Christmas parties, Christmas eve candlelight Service), something new was added in 1993. It was the Hanging of the Greens. This was a two hours' worship service during which members of the congregation decorated the entire sanctuary in an impressive service. Many members hoped this service would be continued in the future. Bruce Ball wrote the script for this presentation.

Bruce Ball was chosen Lay Person of the Year 1993

Alice Bigham had served as chairperson of the Administrative Board for five years. December 5, 1993 was her last Sunday to preside. She had provided strong leadership. Her faithful and dedicated service was recognized by Reverend Bill Taylor and others present. She was succeeded by Avery Fuller.

At the end of 1993 Dr. Candace Bailey resigned as organist and choir director. Once again Diane Penrose agreed to serve in that position.

Gene Weston had been in charge of the church flowers for six years. Barbara Woodin assumed that responsibility in January, 1994.

Since 1982 the Franklinton Church has participated with other churches in the area in operating the Christian Service Center. This year because of extenuating circumstances, the service organization was discontinued.

In March the Reverend Belton Joyner, District Superintendent of the Raleigh District, preached a revival in the church.

In April an informative and interesting study on the Caribbean was led by Mission Chairperson Ialeen Mode.

In May the Youth led the Mothers' Day Service, and in June the Methodist Women led the Father's Day Service.

The Reverend William V. Taylor returned to the Franklinton United Methodist Church for a third year.

On June 17th. the Youth sponsored and hosted a Sleep-in-the-Street for Habitat for Humanity. Over two thousand dollars was raised in this first time ever event. To add to the excitement, it was announced that an anonymous donor had given a tract of land in Franklinton on which to build a house.



In 1844 the Methodist Episcopal Church South was organized. This year 1994 is the year of the one hundred and fiftieth birthday of what is now the Franklinton United Methodist Church. On October 16, 1994 the church will celebrate with a Homecoming Service and dinner. The members of the Homecoming/History Committee are Edith Jackson, Alice Bigham, Mary Elizabeth and Brodie Green, Mattie Whitaker, A.B. Allen Jr., Avery Fuller, Phil Whitfield, and Bill Taylor.

Mrs. Eleanor Vann Rose wrote the history of the church from 1844 to 1955. Edith Jackson continued from that date until the present, 1994. Copies of the history will be available on October 16, 1994.







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